DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 310 107 SP 031 424

TITLE	Role Models, Sports and Youth. NSSC Resource Paper.
INSTITUTION	National School Safety Center, Malibu, CA.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
PUB DATE	Mar 89
GRANT	85-MU-CX-0003
NOTE	41p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adolescents; Antisocial Behavior; *Athletes; Athletic Coaches; *Athletics; *Delinquency Prevention; *Males; Peer Influence; Preadolescents; *Role Models; Team Sports

ABSTRACT

Research and numerous model programs suggest that sport plays an important social role. Particularly among youth, sports and professional athlete role models help deter juvenile delinquency. An overview is presented of current efforts to involve young people, particularly inner-city black youths, in athletic activities. A majority of sociological studies have shown that young athletes, regardless of their socioeconomic status, are less delinquent than comparable non-athletes and are less likely to be involved in serious offenses. Well-known black male athletes have proven to be effective role models for boys, not only in encouraging them to engage in sports activities, but to resist peer pressure and the drug culture. This booklet discusses ways in which youngsters are being persuaded to become involved in sports and other activities. A selection of articles from newspapers and magazines that deal with this subject is appended. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED310107

ROLE MODELS, SPORTS AND YOUTH

NSSC RESOURCE PAPER

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Greenbaum

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

National School Safety Center
Pepperdine University
Malibu, CA 90265
818/377-6200

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

First Printing--March 1989

The National School Safety Center is a partnership of the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education and Pepperdine University.

Prepared under Grant #85-MU-CX-0003 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Ronald D. Stephens, Executive Director
Stuart Greenbaum, Communications Director
Ronald W. Garrison, Field Services Director
Bernard James, Special Counsel

Brenda Turner, Project Editor

SP031 426

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ROLE MODELS, SPORTS AND YOUTH

From collecting baseball cards, to playing Little League, to watching the World Series, either as a participant or as a spectator, sports has been a part of our lives since early childhood. Besides the obvious satisfaction we experience from this involvement, research and numerous model programs suggest that sports plays an important social role. Particularly among youth, sports and professional athlete role models help deter juvenile delinquency.

Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, educators, sociologists, psychologists and penologists have contended that sports can serve as an effective and powerful antidote to delinquency. During the 19th century, England became the first country to advance the idea that involvement in sports can serve as a deterrent to delinquency. "In the English public schools . . . sport was used as a mechanism of social control," explains researcher Jeffrey O. Segrave, author of the article "Sport and Juvenile Delinquency," which appeared in Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews in 1983. "Specifically, sport was used as a substitute for the stealing, bullying and drinking that dominated the leisure hours of the English schoolboy," he says.

The United States soon began to place more emphasis on youth sports as well, and President Theodore Roosevelt applauded the founding of the Public Schools Athletic League in 1903. Roosevelt said that since the children in the tenement house districts of New York were deprived of play opportunities, "the energies they should work off in wholesome exercise, in vigorous play, find vent in the worst feats of the gangs which represent so much that is vicious in our city life." J. Edgar Hoover, head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation from 1924 to 1972, declared that "by diverting the physical energy of youth into constructive channels, Little League Baseball helps curb juvenile delinquency."

Many athletes have told about how being active in sports changed their lives. "Athletes themselves have also lent credibility to the deterrent argument and have declared in biographies and interviews that were it not for their athletic participation they would probably have become involved in delinquency, crime and drugs," Segrave points out.

Sports stars such as Jackie Robinson, Johnny Unitas, Lou Gehrig and Wilma Rudolph inspired countless young people and became American heroes. Many of today's youth still look to athletes as their role models. A 1988 survey of some Missouri high school seniors asked the question: "Who are the heroes of today's youth?" The seniors' top choice was Chicago Bulls basketball player Michael Jordan.

NSSC'S URBAN SCHOOL SAFETY CAMPAIGNS

Because of the influence sports and athletes can have on young people, the National School Safety Center has teamed up with several top professional athletes to tell kids that they can challenge the negative influences of peer pressure, drugs, bullying and gangs to win in life. NSSC's Urban School Safety Campaigns target high-crime, metropolitan areas.

Los Angeles Dodgers' pitching ace Fernando Valenzuela was the first to be featured in a full-color poster produced by NSSC, a partnership of the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education and Pepperdine University. Valenzuela's advice to "Join a team, not a gang!" hit home for kids in Los Angeles, considered the youth gang capital of America. Los Angeles County now has an estimated 600 gangs with approximately 70,000 gang members.

In his message on the poster, Valenzuela tells young people, "I can't imagine there is a kid alive that, in his heart, wouldn't rather steal second base than a car; or knock the life out of a ball . . . instead of another kid. Put your hitting, stealing and power to good use. Join a team, not a gang!"

Author and researcher J.H. Fichter conveyed this same message when he wrote, "The boy who steals second isn't stealing autos." Sports proponents have long maintained that athletics occupies the spare time of youth--time that could otherwise be used in deviant behavior.

NSSC distributed the Valenzuela poster to approximately 1,800 elementary, junior high and high schools in the Los Angeles area. Perhaps the best testimony about the success of the poster in reaching schoolchildren has come from a class of sixth-graders at an inner-city Los Angeles school. Each student wrote to NSSC requesting a copy of the poster.

"Please send me a free poster of Fernando Valenzuela because I always say no to drugs and I am not into gangs or drugs. . . . With that poster I can remind myself to stay out of gangs and say say no to drugs and stay out of jail," one boy wrote. A girl in the class said in her letter: "I know this poster is about Fernando Valenzuela and that he's against gangs. I don't like gangs. I think it's kind of stupid. You just waste your life. It's better if you go to college."

Chicago Bears lineman William "The Fridge" Perry helped tackle the problem of schoolyard bullies by appearing on NSSC's second poster. "The Fridge says, 'Bullying is uncool!'" is the caption for the Perry poster, which was distributed initially to more than 600 schools in the Chicago area and eventually to thousands of schools nationwide.

While many parents and educators alike have passed off bullying behavior as simply "kids being kids," the problem is a serious one that can no longer be ignored. Research now shows that one in 10 students is regularly victimized by bullies. And bullies often don't outgrow their destructive behavior, according to research conducted by University of Illinois at Chicago Professor Leonard D. Eron. A study by Eron shows that young bullies whose behavior goes unchecked are five times more likely than their classmates to have criminal records as well as job and family problems when they become adults.

Overcoming peer pressure is the focus of the most recent NSSC Urban School Safety Campaign, with a poster that features Washington Bullets standouts Manute Bol and Tyrone "Muggsy" Bogues. "Make peer pressure a challenge, not an excuse!" is the message conveyed by 7-foot-6-inch Bol and 5-foot-4-inch Bogues, the tallest and shortest players in NBA history. The Bullets players urge students to ". . . choose what's right for you. Say no to gangs, drugs, bullying . . . and yes to you, your education and your future." More than 4,000 schools in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia received copies of the poster. (Although both players are now on different teams, the message and poster remain popular.)

Other athletes from major U.S. cities are being recruited for future NSSC Urban School Safety Campaigns.

ATHLETES AS ROLE MODELS

Debi Thomas, the bronze medal winner in women's figure skating at the 1988 Winter Olympics, told Women's Sports and Fitness magazine that she decided to become a skater after seeing a performance of the Ice Follies at age 3. Thomas also was later influenced by a neighbor, Olympic gold medalist Peggy Fleming.

"Talented and accomplished individuals have always awakened in others a sense of their own capabilities and a desire to fulfill their own potential," according to the article titled "Every Girl Should Have One." The article pointed out that "throughout history, role models have demonstrated what is possible, and others have followed their lead."

Even those who have found success in other professions have been inspired by athletes. Astronaut Sally Ride noted that she had wanted to be a great tennis player. "Billie Jean King inspired me to excel. And when I wanted to be the first woman in space, her determination and enthusiasm motivated me. Her spirit is infectious," Ride said.

A report by the Women's Sports Foundation showed that more than 94 percent of the women they surveyed mentioned public figures as role models, including many athletes. One of the foundation's

primary objectives is to ensure that girls are exposed to positive female role models.

Chris Evert, in a World Tennis magazine article, said, "My first role model, of sorts, was Maureen Connolly. When I was 11 years old, my dad did a clinic for Wilson with Connolly. I was one of three kids who got the opportunity to hit with her." Evert said that later she also admired Billie Jean King. "The one important influence I think I've had on young players is sportsmanship," Evert said. "The message I try to get across is that you should enjoy competition, and just competing is more important than winning or losing."

The impact made by Detroit Pistons basketball All-Star Isiah Thomas has led one Detroit writer to say: "He's too good to apply the term 'role model' to, but that's what he is. And the remarkable thing about him is that he's a role model for all ages. There haven't been many like that."

Thomas, who was named to the NBA All-Star starting team in each of his first five seasons with the Pistons, often makes public appearances and speeches on behalf of anti-drug and anti-crime causes. As one of nine children growing up in a Chicago ghetto, Thomas knows all too well the destructive influence drugs, crime and gangs can have on young people. Three of his older brothers also began playing basketball but turned to drugs and crime (all are now rehabilitated). Thomas was determined not to follow the same path.

"Isiah Thomas lived the dream of becoming a pro, alternately encouraged and dismayed by his brothers' initial success and ultimate failure in turning a schoolyard game into a livelihood," according to the article "The Book on Isiah," which appeared in the February 1988 issue of Northwest magazine. Now, as one of the NBA's best, Detroit's youth listen to what Thomas has to say. The article recounts an incident in which two black youths at a Detroit drugstore were asked by a shopper if they knew whose face was pictured on a poster:

> "Everybody knows him," the two replied, almost in chorus. "That's Isiah." Then the taller of the two pantomimed a layup shot.
> "Do you believe what he tells you?" they were asked.
> "Everybody believes him," one of them said.

RESEARCH ON ROLE MODELS AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN SPORTS

Although research on role models for youth is limited, an article by Spencer H. Holland in the November 1987 issue of Education Digest stresses that inner-city young minority boys are particularly in need of male role models.

"The inability of urban public schools to stem the tide of failure that characterizes the plight of black male children in the inner city is well documented," Holland says. "The most common reasons cited for their academic and social failings are that such boys come from poor, single-parent, female-headed households, they have no positive male role models, and they view the educational setting as feminine and not relevant to their daily lives," he maintains.

A variety of factors appear to determine whether a child will imitate the behavior of an adult model. "Sex, race, power, authority, attractiveness, and perceived similarity to self are among the determinants that have been found to be important antecedents to imitative behavior in children," Holland says. "This knowledge may provide us with an approach to the prevention of academic failure in inner-city black boys, specifically, and male students, generally."

In many elementary schools, most of the administrators, teachers and counselors are female. Inner-city girls, Holland explains, "are exposed very early in their academic careers to positive, consistent, literate, black females who offer alternative role models to those encountered in the girls' non-school environments. But boys usually have little, if any, early exposure to positive male role models. "Most boys do not have male teachers until they enter the later elementary grades or junior high school, and, for the inner-city boy, this is much too late," he concludes.

Recruiting more males to teach in the primary grades is one of the solutions Holland gives for this problem. "Men who are trained in early-childhood education can make a difference by their very presence as part of the instructional staff," he says. Holland urges community groups, religious groups and athletic organizations to assist schools in training young boys by providing positive role models.

Segrave suggests that the earliest known study on the subject of recreation and delinquency was published in 1907 by T. Burns. Burns concluded from a survey conducted in Chicago that "to provide a probation district with adequate play facilities is coincident with a reduction in delinquency of from 28 to 70 percent, or 44 percent as an average."

An increasing amount of research has been done on the relationship between interscholastic athletics and delinquency since W.E. Schafer's groundbreaking "Participation in Interscholastic Athletics and Delinquency: A Preliminary Study" was published in 1959. The majority of these studies have shown that athletes, regardless of their socioeconomic status, are less delinquent than comparable non-athletes and are less likely than non-athletes to be involved in serious offenses.

Segrave cites several studies which found that athletes generally have a better self-image, enjoy a higher peer status, and are more interested in school and studying that non-athletes. In reviewing the research, Segrave concludes that a number of factors seem to account for the lower delinquency rate among athletes, including: relief from boredom, moral lessons, perceived peer status, non-deviant role models, constructive use of time, interpersonal skills and knowledge, strong social controls, less internal and external pressure toward rebellion, and less need to assert masculinity through deviant behavior.

ATHLETES WORKING WITH YOUTH

NSSC set a precedent for working with sports figures in the past with its successful "Educating minors is a major league concern" public service campaign featuring New York Yankees superstar Dave Winfield and co-sponsored by the Winfield Foundation.

Begun in 1977 to promote better health and education for youth, the Winfield Foundation has come to concentrate its efforts on combating substance abuse. Eric Swenson, the foundation's coordinator for conferences and publications, said they are currently working with various communities to provide expertise in the development of community task forces or other organizations to deal with the problem of drug abuse.

"Because of our prominence, professional and even college athletes can play a significant role in turning the drug problem around," Winfield says in his book Turn It Around! "Whether or not we are capable or comfortable in the role, millions of Americans, especially youngsters, look up to us. Athletes have a platform from which to speak, a pedestal upon which we have been placed, that few others in America can command," he added. "I have used this platform in the past and will continue to use it. Being a role model is a responsibility and trust. . . ."

In the pro-education campaign with NSSC, Winfield emphasized the importance of role models for youth. "Youngsters need positive guidance and support--at home and in school--to achieve their maximum potential," he said. "They are looking for role models. It's our responsibility to show them the benefits of good health and quality education."

Pros for Kids was founded in 1982 by former San Francisco 49er football players Delvin Williams and Larry Schreiber. Williams, an All-Pro running back in 1978, serves as executive director of Pros for Kids, a non-profit anti-drug organization based in Northern California. Orlando Cepeda, Keena Turner and Mary T. Meagher are among the many Pros for Kids athletes who meet personally with young people, answering questions and telling about their personal experiences in the competitive world of sports.

In addition to its summer camps and numerous other activities, Pros for Kids operates an On Track program in various Northern and Southern California high schools, funded by a state grant. On Track is an intensive, semester-long program in which professional athletes become part of the school's teaching staff, conducting classes and various activities to help students keep free from drugs and alcohol.

"From my own experience as a kid, I've always wanted to be an athlete," Williams said in a telephone interview. "I think everyone at some time or another has had a dream to be an athlete. All through our lives, athletes have an impact on us." Williams, who himself overcame a drug problem, believes that athletes--whether they've had problems with drugs or not--can serve as a positive role model to help influence kids away from substance abuse. "That's what we've been trying to do--to use our influence to get kids to see that no matter what you want to be in life, no matter what your dream is, you can attain it," he explained.

Another organization that utilizes athletes as role models is the New Jersey-based Lifegames. Former pro football player Al Dixon, who retired from the San Francisco 49ers after winning the Super Bowl in 1985, founded and now serves as executive director for Lifegames.

In addition to maintaining a network of athletes throughout the country who are willing to do everything from counseling with young people to helping with a local program, Lifegames works with the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services in its residential centers. "We particularly deal with emotionally disturbed kids who are from socially neglected areas or have some sort of family problems," Dixon explained.

"The kids are very receptive to me and the other athletes simply because we usually start out with some type of sports camp program where we get them to see that we are down to earth and will do different things with them," Dixon said. This one-on-one contact builds communication as the athletes continue to visit the centers on a consistent basis. "We are able to talk to them about what has happened with us during our lifetime, and they open up and talk about what's on their mind," he added.

Former Seattle Seahawks and Dallas Cowboys linebacker Ken Hutcherson, along with several other current and former professional athletes, in 1988 formed the Youth Challenge project. As the program progresses, the athletes plan to go to schools in the Seattle area and lead workshops for small groups of youngsters, to serve as role models and mentors for them, and to help steer them toward productive goals. Among the other athletes involved in Youth Challenge are Seattle Mariners baseball players Dave Brunridge, Alvin Davis and Harold Reynolds; David Hughes, former Seahawks fullback; and Andre Anderson, who played football for the Dallas Cowboys and New York Jets.

Sam Brunelli, a retired Denver Broncos football player who now serves as executive director of the American Legislative Council in Washington, D.C., frequently speaks to young people and others about the benefits of sports and role models. "Sports can make a difference in young men's and women's lives," Brunelli said. "Important lessons can be taught through sports. And let's face it, college and professional athletes have always had a special kind of rapport with young people," he continued.

"Next to parents, I think coaches and athletes have more success in leading kids lives away from drugs and into positive things than anyone else. We've all seen how coaches and athletes can reach and influence for good the lives of the children of our nation in ways others simply cannot," Brunelli said. "Athletes can be role models because the competitive sports arena mirrors reflections of life, where athletes courageously endure and often surmount incredible hardships and reversals. Through competitive athletics might just come the forging of one's character."

Brunelli went on to say that "sports has always been an arena in which children and athletes are measured in clear and universal standards of measurement." With proper supervision and coaching, he explained, "the only limits are those of an individual's God-given abilities and the abilities of the best players of the game. Sports is still an activity in which excellence can be seen and achieved each day, remaining relatively unaffected by the general erosion of standards in the culture at large."

Students Unified with Pros Encouraging Responsibility, called SUPER TEAMS, was founded in 1984 by Brig Owen, former defensive captain for the Washington Redskins football team. The anti-drug program for Washington, D.C., area youths is a joint effort of the public schools, the Commission on Public Health, and the National Football League Players' Association as well as other professional athletes.

With the help of trained counselors and professional athletes who the students admire, SUPER TEAMS develops a core group of student leaders and athletes to be role models and to serve as peer counselors in their high schools. These trained students also are used to positively influence younger children in their communities.

SUPER TEAM's three-phase program begins with an in-service training seminar for coaches, school counselors, teachers, school administrators, parents and professional athletes. The second phase of the program consists of an intensive five-day residential training seminar for students and adults. This phase also includes the day-to-day operation of the program within the schools once the residential training is complete. In the final phase, follow-up and evaluation activities are conducted. Schools with a SUPER TEAMS program have reported more than a

30 percent increase in the number of honor roll students, and improved grades have opened new opportunities for some students who never before considered attending college.

Many other athletes, both individually and jointly, have used their influence to reach youth. The Los Angeles Lakers basketball team in late 1987 released an anti-drug rap video called "Just Say No." The Lakers spoke and performed in person at the Los Angeles Forum in April 1988 for 8,500 schoolchildren attending an anti-drug rally organized by the Laker Wives in cooperation with city and school officials. The Laker Wives also have completed another project, a 32-minute video titled "The Winning Choice," in which Laker players discuss the perils of drug abuse with students. The video was distributed free to schools in Los Angeles and Orange counties during 1988.

Another Los Angeles team, the NFL's Raiders, joined with the Los Angeles Police Department during the fall of 1988 to distribute 3 million football trading cards carrying an anti-gang message to children. The cards were handed out free during the six-week campaign to boys and girls who approached a police officer and asked for them. A previous program had been conducted with Dodgers baseball cards and was equally successful.

In an effort to combat this nation's problem of drinking and driving, the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration formed a coalition called TEAM, which stands for Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management. One part of the TEAM media campaign has been the production of a number of public service announcements, which have carried messages such as: "The Designated Driver--Your Most Valuable Player," "Don't Let a Drinking Driver Take You . . . Anywhere," and "Time Out. Don't Let a Friend Drive After He's Had Too Much to Drink."

Although many athletes are using their status as role models to positively guide young people into making the right choices in life, much more remains to be done. As Michael Cooper of the Los Angeles Lakers told the Los Angeles Times in a June 1987 article series on Sports vs. Gangs: "I'm always out there [giving talks] because I know that when I was growing up I was looking for help. That's what we're doing, trying to help one, two, as many as we can."

INVOLVING YOUTH IN SPORTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

Former U.S. Secretary of Education William J. Bennett, who was selected by President George Bush to serve in the newly created Cabinet-level position of "drug czar" to combat our nation's drug problem, has expressed his belief that sports can be a valuable part of the educational process. As the 1987 recipient of the Humanitarian Award from the American Sportscasters Association, Bennett concluded his acceptance speech with these remarks:

> Indifference, alienation, boredom--these are the killers of the spirit of the young. But sports can rekindle that spirit. Sports are still a way to learn how to give heart and spirit to a common enterprise. Sports are still a way to learn that it is better to believe and to fight than to doubt and to withdraw. Finally, sports are still a way to learn, after either victory or defeat, that another day, another chance comes tomorrow. And so sports can indeed be a very good thing, a very important part of education.

Yet another killer is now preying on the spirit of America's youth. Crack--the cheap, highly addictive, smokeable form of the drug cocaine--has gained a firm grip on the lives of countless gang members and other young people lured by the prospect of making big money selling the increasingly popular drug. Newsweek magazine began its Nov. 28, 1988, cover story on crack by telling about a Little League team in Detroit that had to fold during the summer because "the players were too busy selling crack to play baseball."

Detroit's youth aren't the only ones affected by drugs and gangs. "It [gang activity] is definitely affecting the development of youth athletics here," said Charles Norman, field operations director for the Community Youth Gang Services Project in South Central Los Angeles. In a Nov. 27, 1988, article in the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Norman added, "To give you an example, we used to have a lot of Little League baseball teams. We don't have those programs anymore and I'll tell you why they stopped. I can remember many a day having our whole team hit the ground because of gang gunfire. I think that ran off a lot of the coaches."

E.C. Robinson, head football coach at L.A.'s Locke High School, also believes gangs are the reason why he is seeing less kids trying out for school sports. "It used to be that we'd have to cut people," he said in the Herald Examiner article. "So many kids now are choosing to get involved with gangs and drugs, I find myself begging kids to come out for the team. It seems like the kids' minds today are preoccupied with gangs, not football."

In Detroit, Los Angeles and elsewhere in our nation's inner cities, the prospect of making huge sums of money has lured many youths into drugs and gangs. "It's hard to convince a lot of kids that drugs and gangs aren't the way to go when they see older kids driving fancy cars and wearing expensive clothes," Norman explained. "Some of these kids are making thousands of dollars a week. That's more glamorous than going to school and working toward a college education and a job that'll pay $30,000, maybe $40,000 a year."

Believing that there must be alternatives to drugs, gangs and illiteracy, Reggie Morris, head basketball coach and a counselor at Los Angeles' inner-city Manual Arts High School, began a program with just that name: "There Must Be Alternatives."

Morris, who himself is a Manual Arts graduate, said he wanted students to see that getting involved in drugs and gangs "is a dead-end street--the only things you can get out of it is that you'll end up in prison or end up dead."

Morris has presented There Must Be Alternatives assemblies for students at Manual Arts and other area schools as well as conducting programs for churches and other special-interest groups in the community. The presentations have included panels of individuals who could be role models for the students--those who were good athletes but didn't make it to the professional level in sports and have had successful careers in other areas. "We have an evaluation sheet at the end of the program where we ask the kids to write down what their first and second options would be for a career. . . . So we have them start thinking about some actual jobs."

One unique assembly presented during the 1987-88 school year at Manual Arts, Morris explained, involved several rehabilitated drug addicts and a young woman--a former Manual Arts student--who was serving time in prison for her gang activities. "She was released from the facility for that day to come with her supervisor and talk to the kids about gangs, where her own involvement in gangs had gotten her, and how she has changed her mind," Morris said. "She was real powerful and had a big impact on the students here." Part of the There Must Be Alternatives programs also includes putting those kids who have problems with drugs and gangs into contact with some referral agencies where they can get help.

"Kids will find a role model, whoever is available, whether or not that person is a positive or negative influence," Morris concludes. "So if a kid doesn't have a positive role model, then he [or she] may still end up with a role model, but it may be the dope dealer or gangster, the person who's riding around with a bunch of money in his pocket and a brand new car and is 18 years old," he adds. "We need to have positive role models who are available, visible and accessible to the community and to the kids."

Robert Maher, principal of Cornwall Central High School in Cornwall-Hudson, New York, has traveled around the country working with young people as part of his Student Leadership Program. "If you survey any given high school across the country, I think you'll find a pretty shocking statistic--at least I found it shocking as I spoke with kids when I traveled around the country," Maher said. "About 50 percent of our kids come from broken and/or single-parent homes. Although schools will do the best they can to assume some of the burden that once fell on the family, there's a limit to what schools can do."

Maher said he believes schools should join with local recreation departments and religious groups to offer youths positive alternatives. "If we don't offer positive alternatives--whether

they be sports, a chess team, debate, intramural programs or activities at after-school centers--I think, today especially, young people have a tendency to gravitate toward negative alternatives," he concluded.

Maher also said prevention methods need to begin early. "People should not be surprised to learn that a lot of kids' lives are shaped by the time they are in the fifth or sixth grade to the point where they've already been considering negative alternatives," he said. "If you lose them at that point, you'll still save a few later, but it's almost the finished product at the high school level." Using himself as an example, Maher said, "I grew up in New York City. And I know what saved me, as saved many others, was involvement in sports and other activities."

One such organization that involves youth in sports and other activities is the non-profit Youth Development, Inc. in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The after-school sports program involves children from 15 elementary schools who participate in league competition. Executive Director Chris Baca said they primarily focus on latchkey children and kids who otherwise would not be involved in sports.

"We want to build a sense of team and pride," Baca said. "And the kids really want to belong to something. We work very closely with school personnel, counselors and principals. If some children are not doing well in school, we tell them they can't be on the team. In almost every case, it's worked positively."

The National Association of Police Athletic Leagues (PAL), a juvenile crime prevention program, primarily uses involvement in sports to prevent juvenile crime. "The idea is to create a positive, supportive environment where kids can learn teamwork and cooperation as well as see a police officer as a role model, somebody that can be their friend, not as someone for them to fear," said Sally Cunningham, director of marketing and member services for PAL's national headquarters in North Palm Beach, Florida.

Since its beginning during the Depression days of the 1930s, PAL now has at least 125 local chapters throughout the United States and Canada. Several of those who participated in PAL activities as youths have gone on to become successful athletes, including Wilt Chamberlain, George "The Ice Man" Gervin, Eric Money, Cyrus Mann and Althea Gibson.

"It's difficult to measure prevention," Cunningham says. "Some of our chapters have conducted studies, and we do know that in years past these cities had a certain number of kids involved in crime, and as a PAL has grown there has been far less crime among children," she added. Since PAL's national headquarters was established five years ago, Cunningham said the organization's growth has been "just unbelievable."

The PAL chapter in Richmond, Virginia, has experienced such growth. "We're being overrun by kids," said Lt. Julius W. Richardson, program director for the Richmond Police Department. Unfortunately, limited city funds have kept the program from expanding beyond youths in a certain housing project. Approximately 350 kids are involved in the program, which includes basketball, baseball, football and track for boys and girls. "Usually when they get out of school at 3:10 p.m., the first place they stop is one of our centers," Richardson said.

Another program targeted toward school-age youth is the Drug Enforcement Administration's Sports Drug Awareness Program. Developed in conjunction with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Football League and the NFL Players Association, the DEA program targets coaches and student athletes to help prevent drug abuse among youth. With the help and involvement of coaches, student athletes are influenced and trained to act as role models, using positive peer pressure to dissuade other students from using drugs.

One-hour, one-day and three-day seminars and clinics are conducted for coaches to assist them in understanding the youth drug problem and to show them how they can implement an awareness program in their high schools. The seminars are staffed by a team of DEA and FBI Special Agents and public affairs staff, key players and officials from professional and amateur sports, high school coaches who have successfully put the program into operation, and other representatives from organizations who are participating in the program. "Amateur and professional athletes are an important part of this team because they serve as role models for young people," according to a DEA representative.

The Forest Hills School District in Cincinnati, Ohio, served as the basis for the DEA program. Although Forest Hills already had a traditional drug abuse prevention program, drugs and alcohol were serious problems for students. Since it was initiated in 1983, Forest Hills' sports-oriented prevention program has been a successful strategy in the battle against student drug and alcohol abuse. "We think we've made big gains," said Mike Hall, who was an athletic director when the program began and now is a high school principal in the Forest Hills district. "We saw an overall and significant improvement. . . . We're not going to get total abstinence among our athletes, but we can get it under control."

Other schools also are developing ways to involve students. Walker Middle School in Charlottesville, Virginia, has a program in which points are awarded to students who participate in after-school activities. At the end of the year, certificates are given to the top 10 boys and girls in each grade. The homeroom with the most points gets its name engraved on a plaque that is displayed at the school. The program, which has been in effect for more than 10 years, has been very successful and has

helped students have a feeling of belonging in addition to developing self-confidence and leadership skills, according to a November 1987 article in Principal magazine.

An after-school program began soon after the start of the 1988-89 school year at Ashley Elementary School in the Denver, Colorado, area, where "the crack cocaine trade has become so bold that children often find the drug lying in the streets," according to an article in Denver's Rocky Mountain News. With the aid of a federal grant and many volunteers, the school's 5- to 11-year-old students may join a drill team, learn how to cook, do needlework, study computers or drama, or play basketball and other games. The parents of every child participating in the after-school activities must show up at periodic sessions for adults on parenting skills and drug abuse prevention.

Los Angeles also launched an after-school program during the 1988-89 school year that is aimed at keeping latchkey children out of gangs. About 300 of the city's elementary and junior high schools have extended their playground programs an extra two hours until 6 p.m. The city allocated $1.8 million to pay for the salaries of two aides at each site to supervise children playing sports or involved in other activities.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT ALTERNATIVES

Although some kids will become involved in gangs, drugs and other negative influences, research and model programs indicate that many young people could be steered away from such a lifestyle through the help of positive role models and becoming involved in sports or other constructive activities.

The Los Angeles Times, in its series on Sports vs. Gangs, told about one such individual. Kenneth Williams was a gang member at age 12. Six of his friends had been killed in gang violence. And at 17, he found himself in Juvenile Hall weighing his options. Williams said he figured he had three choices: Get killed, go to jail or play football.

Knowing it wasn't enough to quit his gang, Williams actually moved during his junior year. At Locke High School, Coach E.C. Robinson served as a role model for Williams. "I knew the day I met the man [Robinson] that I would never be a gang member again--I'd be a football player," Williams said. Choosing sports earned him a college scholarship and a new direction in life.

"When I see someone going in that direction [toward gang involvement], I tell them they're going to lose their life. I tell them I used to be in the streets and I know what it's about. Either you're going to be in jail the rest of your life, or you're going to be in the ground," Williams concluded. "Play ball, and you'll get a new direction in life."

RESOURCE ORGANIZATIONS

Drug Enforcement Administration
Demand Reduction Section
1405 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20537

Lifegames
1022 Ironbound Avenue
Plainfield, New Jersey 07060
201/769-6143

National Association of Police Athletic Leagues
200 Castlewood Drive
North Palm Beach, Florida 33408
305/844-1823

Pros For Kids
1011 Cadillac Way, Suite C
Burlingame, California 94010
415/343-8279

SUPER TEAMS
1411 K Street, N.W., Suite 910
Washington, D.C. 20005
202/783-1533

There Must Be Alternatives
c/o Coach Reggie Morris
Manual Arts High School
4131 South Vermont
Los Angeles, California 90037

The Winfield Foundation
2050 Center Avenue, Room 420
Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024
201/461-5535

Youth Development, Inc.
1710 Centro Familiar S.W.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87105
505/873-1604

REFERENCES

Chapin, Dwight. "Big Gains for Drug Program." San Francisco Chronicle, November 29, 1987.

Crouse, Karen. "Ganging Up Against the Preps." Los Angeles Heral Examiner, November 27, 1988.

Evert, Chris. "A Role Model." World Tennis, October 1986, pp. 36-37.

"Every Girl Should Have One." Women's Sports and Fitness, June 1986, p. 54.

Gorlick, Arthur C. "Athletes Challenge Students to Succeed." Seattle Post Intelligencer, December 3, 1988.

Holland, Spencer H. "Positive Primary Education for Young Black Males." Education Digest, November 1987, pp. 56-58.

Jeanes, William. "The Book on Isiah." Northwest, February 1988, pp. 20, 24, 56.

"Lakers Take Court for Drug Message." Los Angeles Times, April 5, 1988.

Law, Ralph L. "It's Participation That Counts." Principal, November 1987, pp. 48-50.

Libman, Gary. "Lakers Say Yes to Video, No to Drugs." Los Angeles Times, September 4, 1987.

Morganthau, Tom, and Miller, Mark. "Crack, Hour by Hour." Newsweek, November 28, 1988, pp. 64-79.

Morrow, Denise. "Area High School Seniors Pick Their Heroes." Daily News & Advertiser (Booneville, Missouri), Feb 17, 1988.

"Raider Trading Cards Put Down Gangs." Los Angeles Times, September 28, 1988.

"School Hits Back at Drug Trade: After-school Programs Offered." Rocky Mountain News (Denver, Colorado), September 28, 1988.

"Schools Will Extend Playground Hours." Los Angeles Times, January 3, 1989.

Segrave, Jeffrey O. "Sport and Juvenile Delinquency." Exercise and Sport Sciences Reviews 2 (1983):181-209.

Teaford, Elliott, and Yount, Robert. "Sports vs. Gangs" (three-part series). Los Angeles Times, June 23-25, 1987.

U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration. For Coaches Only: How to Start a Drug Prevention Program. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1986.

U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration. Team Up for Drug Prevention With America's Young Athletes. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984.

U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice. NIJ Reports, July/August 1988, pp. 9-10

Winfield, Dave, with Swenson, Eric. Turn It Around! There's No Room Here for Drugs. New York: PaperJacks Ltd., 1987.

Woolf, Norma Bennett. "Recruit Coaches and Athletes to Help Battle Drugs." American School Board Journal, February 1986, p. 36.

U.S. Department of Justice
Drug Enforcement Administration
Demand Reduction Section

Sports Drug Awareness Program

History and Development

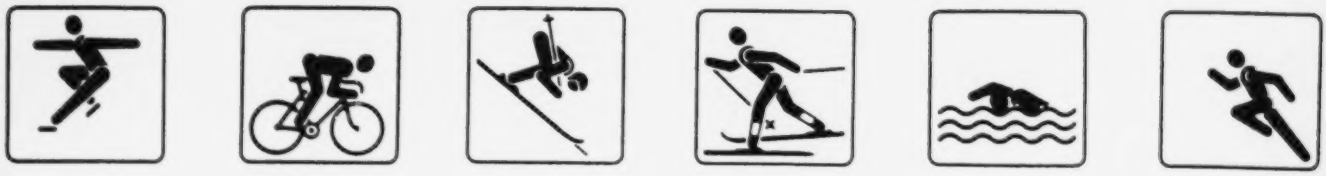
For the past several years, DEA and FBI Special Agents have been working together in a professional sports drug awareness program. Teams of agents have met with players in each of the major league sports to discuss activities within their jurisdiction that impact on the professional athlete: drug trafficking, drug abuse, and other offenses, such as gambling. This program has been extremely well received.

In further recognition of our responsibilities to reduce the demand for drugs – –drug abuse prevention– – the Drug Enforcement Administration developed the Sports Drug Awareness Program in conjunction with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Football League, and NFL Players Association to reach 5.5 million high school athletes with drug abuse prevention information. This program was formally inaugurated by Attorney General William French Smith in Lexington, Kentucky on June 27, 1984. Additional organizations that have joined in the program include the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, Major League Baseball, National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth, National Association of Broadcasters, National Federation of State High School Associations and the Sporting Goods Manufactureres Association.

The goal of this program is to prevent drug abuse among school age youth, with special emphasis on the role of the coach and the student athlete. We want to initially reach 48,000 men and women coaches in 20,000 high schools across the country who can, in turn, help us reach the 5.5 million student athletes. For the most part, the coaches are leaders and key teachers in the schools who have earned respect and loyalty from their student bodies. With the help and involvement of the coaches, we feel that student athletes can be influenced and trained to act as role models, using positive peer pressure to dissuade other students from using drugs.

The key elements in carrying out this program include the distribution of a brochure to every coach in the United States. The brochure, entitled "For Coaches Only: How to Start a Drug Prevention Program," provides information to coaches on the need for high school prevention programs involving student athletes. This is intended to provide awareness and get the attention of the coaches to the program. Secondly, we are distributing a booklet of materials containing an action plan and guidelines on how to start a drug abuse prevention program for student athletes. This booklet, entitled "Team Up For Drug Prevention," contains a description of a model high school program in Cincinnati, Ohio. Finally, we are providing some one – hour, one – day, and three – day seminars and clinics for coaches in order to assist them in understanding the nature of the youth drug problem and how to take the necessary steps to develop and implement a program in their high schools. These seminars are staffed by a team of DEA and FBI Special Agents and Public Affairs staff, key players and officials from professional and amateur sports, high school coaches who have successfully put this program into operation and other representatives from organizations who are participating in the program.

The presentations and assistance deal with such issues as the profile of an athlete, the impact of drug and alcohol use on an athlete and team, how the coach fits in, where the coach can go for help, how to communicate with athletes and the description of a model high school program in action. In the first twelve months of



this effort, over 7,000 coaches received instruction on drug abuse prevention. During the same period over 100,000 of the specially prepared sports drug prevention publications have been distributed.

Immediately after the program was launched DEA received an overwhelming response from numerous agencies and organizations involved in various aspects of education and sports, as well as from many criminal justice and community organizations. As a result, in November 1984, with support from approximately 40 other groups, DEA launched a second phase of this initiative. Each participating entity has pledged to use its unique constituency to help prevent drug abuse by directing prevention information and messages toward the 57 million young people now in kindergarten through college.

We are now involved in carrying the Sports Drug Awareness Program into homes by way of drug abuse prevention public service announcements. The first of the PSA's developed in September, 1985, featured NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle with Gene Upshaw, Executive Director of the NFL Players Association. In early 1986 a second PSA series was completed. These PSA's featured DEA Administrator John C. Lawn and Dave Winfield of the New York Yankees. They have a special message for youth who may drink and use drugs to prove they're adult during prom and graduation time.

For further information, contact:

Demand Reduction Section
Office of Congressional and Public Affairs
Drug Enforcement Administration
1405 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20537

For futher drug and alcohol abuse prevention information, contact:

Prevention Branch
National Institute on Drug Abuse
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

National Clearinghouse on Drug Abuse Information
11400 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852

Seattle, WA
(King Co.)
Seattle Post Intelligencer
(Cir. D. 200,495)

DEC 3 1988

Allen's P.C.B 1st 1988

Athletes challenge students to succeed

By Arthur C. Gorlick
P-I Reporter

Big Ken Hutcherson, former linebacker for the Seattle Seahawks and the Dallas Cowboys, stood in the center of the gymnasium floor at the Central District's Garfield High School yesterday.

"What we have to say is very important," he told rows of students lining bleachers in the building, where walls are covered with squiggly script signatures of the Bloods and Crips street gangs. "But we're not here to talk to everybody."

And it was clear that some of the kids chatting and laughing and giggling didn't want to hear the voice booming over a loudspeaker.

But it was also clear that there were many others who blocked out the background murmur and the shouts and whistling.

They were the ones who stared entranced and listened attentively as Hutcherson and at least eight other present and former professional athletes broke the ice at Garfield for a new program, Youth Challenge, to help guide kids away from drugs and gangs and violence.

Ravon Johnson, executive director of Corporate Action against Drugs, which sponsors the Youth Challenge project, says its mission "is to build creative and productive citizens from the ashes of despair, confusion and resentment."

He helped found the program earlier this year and enlisted top area corporations when he felt "something was missing" from his career as a marketing executive.

As the program progresses, the athletes plan to return to Garfield and other schools and lead workshops for small groups of youngsters, to serve as role models and mentors for them and to help steer them toward productive goals.

"Where there is no vision, people perish," Harold Reynolds, second baseman for the Seattle Mariners, told the kids in the gym's bleachers. "It's up to you to make your school what you want to make it."

Steve August, former Seattle Seahawks lineman now in the trucking business with Tony Benjamin, a former teammate who also participated in the Youth Challenge assembly at Garfield yesterday, told the kids about growing up poor in housing projects in San Bernardino, Calif.

"We're interested in you . . . we're interested in your future," August said earnestly. "I know what it's like not to have things."

Not all of the athletes talked at the session, but all played in a short basketball game against the Garfield Bulldogs faculty.

Among them were Alvin Davis, star first baseman of the Seattle Mariners; David Hughes, former Seattle Seahawks fullback; Andre Anderson, who played football with the Dallas Cowboys and New York Jets, and Dave Brunridge of the Seattle Mariners.

The kids shouted, screamed and applauded when their teachers dazzled the athletes by stealing passes and swished three-point shots from midcourt.

They stomped their feet and barked like bulldogs as a short faculty member dribbled skillfully past tall, lanky John Gregg, a former Seattle SuperSonic, and laid the ball through the rim. Garfield's faculty won 23 to 21.

Later, Aaron Ruth, 15, a 10th grader, said he and his friends were "caught up in the excitement" of the program.

"It was fun," said Lynnetta Johnson, 14, a ninth grader, who said she was moved by some of the stories the athletes told of their lives. "It's sounds like back then, things were hard."

"I thought it was great," said Bijan Washington, 14. "It may help some kids keep away from drugs. But they'll have to want to help themselves."

Three Seattle police officers who had given up a day off to help with the program — Robert A. Davis, Daryl Stone and John E. Manning — were enthused.

"All kids at all schools — rich kids at rich kids, poor kids at poor schools — they're all under pressure these days," Manning said.

"Some of these kids just don't know how to ask for help," Davis said. "I think these athletes can teach them how."

But Mariner Reynolds wasn't so sure.

"I think they know how to ask," he said. "I think we've just got to learn how to hear them when they do ask for help."

1428/

Pico Rivera, CA
(Los Angeles Co.)
Pico Rivera News
(Cir. W. 15,126)

SEP 2 0 1987

Allen's P. C. B Est. 1886

Montebello, CA
(Los Angeles Co.)
Montebello News
(Cir. 2xW 17,360)

SEP 2 0 1987

Allen's P. C. B Est. 1888

Valenzuela pitches for drug-free kids

2963

"Join a team, not a gang!" says Los Angeles Dodgers pitching ace Fernando Valenzuela to Los Angeles County youth, who are the focus of a new anti-gang public service campaign sponsored by the National School Safety Center.

A serious problem in large cities throughout the United States, gangs and gang warfare are increasing at extraordinary rates in the Los Angeles area. More than 200 gang related killings have occurred in Los Angeles County this year, an 80 percent increase over last year, according to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office.

NSSC, a U.S. Department of Justice school crime prevention program, is using Los Angeles as a prototype for localized responses to the national campaign. Pro athletes in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, San Francisco and Miami will also be called on to talk kids out of gang involvement in their respective cities.

The primary component of each local effort will be the production of a poster featuring a prominent athlete, which will be distributed to schools. In this first effort, Valenzuela promotes team sports as a positive alternative to gangs. "Make no mistake, gangs are bad news! Brothers fight brothers. Members kill and get killed," Valenzuela says. "Put your hitting, stealing and power to good use. Join a team, not a gang!"

With the assistant of the Los Angeles School's superintendent's office the poster is being distributed to all 1,500 public elementary, junior high and senior high schools in Los Angeles County.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SPORTS

High-Energy Hero

Yankee All-Star Launches National Campaign

by Neil Scott

When Yankee All-Star Dave Winfield steps to the plate, an immediate advantage goes to the Bronx bombers. Pitchers think twice, opposing managers hold their breath, and the fans go wild. Dave Winfield is the kind of player who makes things happen.

For the past 15 seasons, Winfield has been a dominant force in major league baseball. In five of the last six years he had over 100 runs batted in (RBIs), and he is a perennial All-Star for the New York Yankees.

On the field for the New York Yankees, Winfield speaks with his powerful bat, but off the field Winfield is equally successful at making things happen. He speaks with his actions and strong personal commitment. Over ten years ago Winfield started the David M. Winfield Foundation, which has directly impacted over a quarter of a million kids around the country. The major concerns of the Foundation are drugs and alcohol, which Winfield calls "the biggest threat to the youth of our nation."

In recent years, especially in light of Nancy Reagan's "Just Say No" campaign, numerous professional athletes from various sports have jumped on the celebrity bandwagon to crusade against alcohol and drugs. Lately it has become the "in thing" in sports and show business to "talk the talk."

Dave Winfield, who is no newcomer to the anti-drug effort, "walks the walk." He was actively involved with the anti-drug movement long before the "Just Say No" campaign began. In fact, "Just Say No" is not one of Winfield's favorite slogans.

"The next step beyond just saying no is turning it around. We want to move the nation from a passive negative statement to positive collective action," said Winfield in a recent address in the nation's capital as he unveiled the latest phase of his national "Turn It Around" campaign.

When it's time for war, the country has to come together.

"It's going to take more than the efforts of the President of this country and his wife. Everyone has to become involved," continued Winfield. "When it's time for war, the country has to come together."

Winfield's "Turn It Around" campaign includes an anti-drug video, which has been translated into four languages and distributed to 62 countries; numerous national and local media appearances; his recently released book *Turn It Around: There's No Room Here for Drugs* (included in this month's Bookshelf on page 54); and a major concert and rally on March 29, 1988 at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., which will feature top rock performers, and sports stars. The rally is being billed as a "Possibility of the Future" Celebration, and it will honor the achievement of the nation's drug-free youth.

The profits from Winfield's book go directly to the Winfield Foundation, which raises about $400,000 annually. Although the Foundation has been involved in other projects in the past, all of the resources are now being put into "Turn It Around."

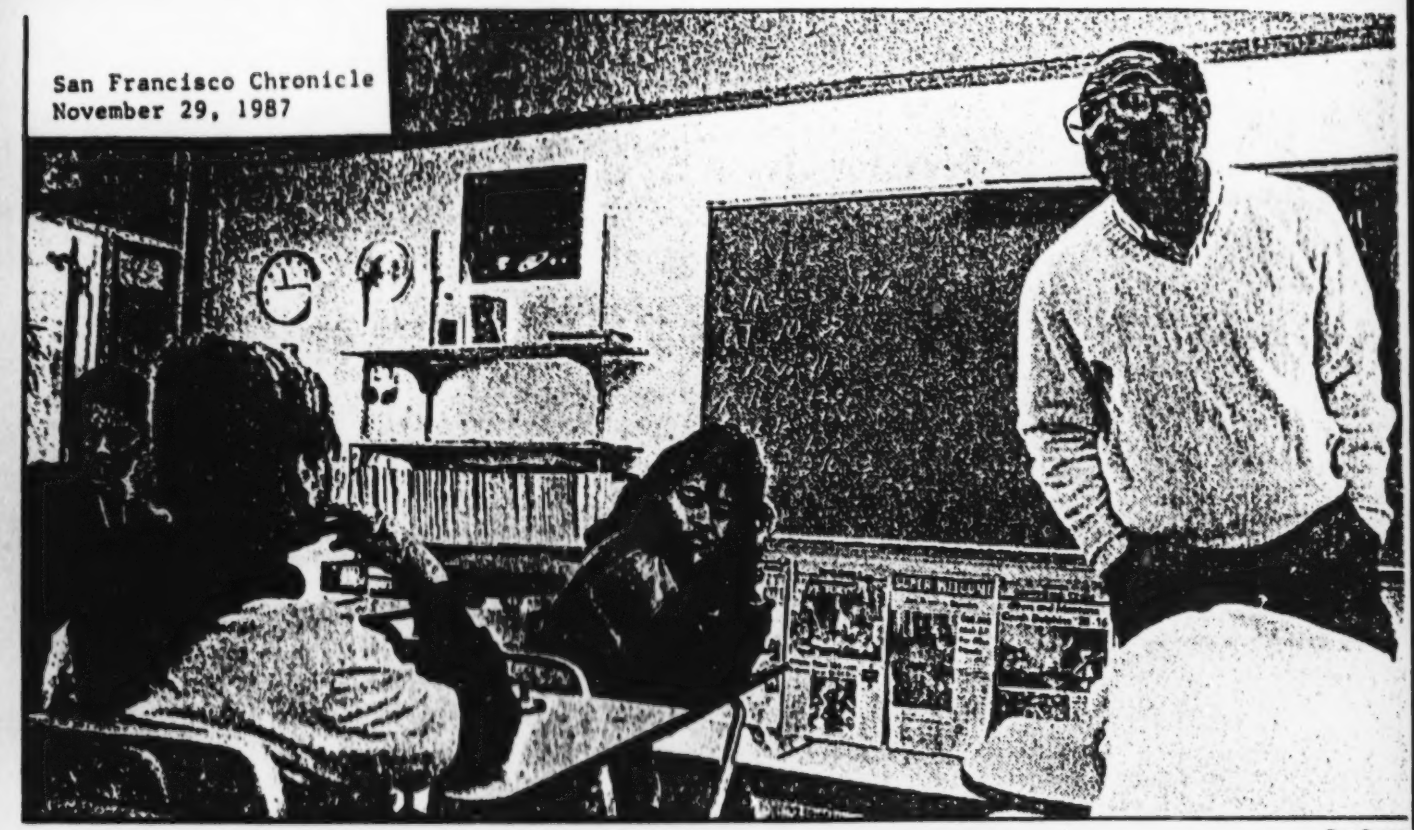
Located in Fort Lee, New Jersey, The David M. Winfield Foundation has a staff of four full-time and several part-time employees. In addition, there's a strong volunteer corps that continues to increase in size and is mobilized to assist with various aspects of the campaign.

It may appear to some that "Turn It Around" may conflict with Dave's other life as the N.Y. Yankee's superstar center fielder. Winfield has been able to master both roles. Yankee owner, George Steinbrenner, however, has been less than excited about Dave's off-the-field activities, often calling them "distractions." Winfield continues to answer this criticism with home runs, RBIs, and spectacular catches in the typical Yankee tradition.

Even during the baseball season, Winfield remains active in the fight against alcohol and drugs. On Yankee road trips, his free time is spent talking to kids in school, making media appearances, and consulting with community leaders. The intensity of his concern and motivation to community positive action is unwavering. Each year his commitment and level of activity increase.

Winfield commands respect. In addition to his physical stature, Winfield is articulate on many subjects, having been a Williams scholar at the University of Minnesota. He's certainly more than "just a ballplayer," albeit an All-Star ballplayer. He's an athlete, humanitarian, entrepreneur, and communicator; he's a hero in the true American tradition.

San Francisco Chronicle
November 29, 1987



Tom Duncan

When former 49ers back Delvin Williams talks, kids — like these at Oceana High School in Pacifica — listen

Big gains for drug program

By Dwight Chapin
EXAMINER SENIOR WRITER

IN SEVEN SEASONS with the San Francisco 49ers and Miami Dolphins, Delvin Williams was among the best running backs in professional football.

He twice rushed for more than 1,200 yards, was an All-Pro in 1978 and was on two Pro Bowl teams.

But there's no telling what he might have accomplished if he'd had a blocker like Nancy Reagan.

The diminutive First Lady certainly isn't constructed along the lines of those bruisers who play in National Football League offensive lines. But she has considerable clout, and she created perhaps the most important opening Delvin Williams ever ran through, four years after his football career ended.

Some background first:

Williams retired from the NFL

DELVIN

—From C-1

in 1981 under a cloud of drug allegations, and he now freely admits that because of the pressures of performing, he used amphetamines to get "up" for games and cocaine to stay high after them.

IN 1982, WITH his problem in check, he and another former 49er, Larry Schreiber, founded an anti-drug organization called Pros for Kids.

"I saw a void at all levels of drug abuse education," Williams says. "Because of my own involvement with drugs, I wanted to enlighten young people. I thought the best way to do that was through sports figures, having the kids ask us questions and hearing what we went through."

Pros for Kids, a non-profit corporation, had almost no budget at the start and Williams ran things from his home in Los Altos. He invested plenty of blood, sweat and his own money, but he couldn't come up with a lot of sustained financial support elsewhere.

In the early years, not enough people were buying. With the outlook at its darkest in 1985, Nancy Reagan, whose own "Just Say No" to drugs campaign was well under way, said she would attend the group's second annual fall fund-raising dinner.

Williams was euphoric, for a minute or two.

"Then I thought, 'Now that we've got her, what are we going to do with her?'" he says. "But I needn't have worried. It worked out just fine. She's a very nice person, and has become very special to me. You really can't measure what she's done for Pros for Kids. Her presence, and her involvement with our program, kind of legitimized what we're doing."

Not to mention helping raise a bundle of money.

The organization netted $110,000 from the 1985 dinner, and made $300,000 more in 1986, when Mrs. Reagan made a return visit.

Those funds, coupled with a three-year state grant that will provide $384,000 annually through June 1989, have brought some security to Pros for Kids.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THE BUDGET FOR fiscal year 1986-87 is $800,000, and Williams says it probably will top $1 million next year.

He is now almost as concerned with managing money properly as he is with raising it.

"It's super important that I be a good administrator," Williams, who serves as executive director of Pros for Kids, says. "People see the flash of our operation — the kids getting help from athletes like Orlando Cepeda and Keena Turner and Mary T. Meagher — but they don't see the rest.

"We have between 30 and 35 people on staff, an office in San Mateo and an outpatient drug counseling office, contracted through San Mateo County, in South San Francisco. Along with our state-funded program, which we call On-Track, we have a Teen Alternative Program, which helps kids learn to help each other, and we run several weeklong, co-educational summer day camps around the Bay Area.

The growth has not been without pain, for Williams and his organization.

"Because I had no business experience, I've had to learn by doing, by trial and error," Williams says. "The responsibility of dealing with public funds is just as stressful as being an athlete was. Personally, I'm now able to recognize where pressure is coming from, why, and how to back away from it. But I'm always cognizant that I don't want to do *anything* that isn't right. Just the slightest appearance that something was wrong would give a bad message to the public."

Williams says he has had to deal with a measure of cynicism about Pros for Kids, as well as continuing scrutiny both from contributors and outsiders.

"People will say, 'Well, I don't know if that will work,'" he says. "Some people think we're rich, which is certainly not correct, and others say athletes are not good role models, and that the ones who have used drugs should not be going into schools and talking about it.

"They say we're glamorizing drugs, but I think just the opposite is true. We've been taught all our lives as athletes how to come back, how to get up when we've been knocked down. I think athletes — whether they've had difficulties with drugs or not — can be excellent role models, in a really positive and organized way."

The organization of Pros for Kids is one of the things Williams is most proud of, and he offers the On-Track program as a prime example.

It's aimed at reducing the incidence of drug and alcohol abuse in young people by using well-known male and female professional and amateur athletes to not just preach but teach — motivating kids to develop goals and coping skills.

Funded through a bill authored by Assemblyman Art Agnos and administered by former teacher Carol Burgoa, On-Track is reaching students at schools throughout the Bay Area and in Orange County, and will be expanding.

Dr. Glenn Nyre, an independent evaluator hired by the State Department of Education to monitor and evaluate the outcome of the program, says, "It's been received very well in the schools it's been in so far. Since it's new, we want to get a picture of how it affects students. We'll be doing post-testing in January to see whether the students' outlooks are changing, whether they're learning how to resist drugs, whether teachers are picking up the On-Track material and integrating it into other classes. But all things point to its having a positive impact."

'Because of my own involvement with drugs, I wanted to enlighten young people'

— Delvin Williams

TWO SCHOOL LEADERS who have had experience with On-Track agree.

"It had an excellent effect here," says vice principal Gary McAdam of Pittsburg High School, site of a pilot program last spring. "The overall operation was great but, to me, the key was the individual (former Warrior guard Raymond Townsend) running it. He was such a strong and likeable person he really set an example. At some level, he probably reached most of the kids in our school."

Principal Al Campbell of Pacifica's Oceana High School, which currently has an an On-Track program, also credits the coordinator, former University of California and pro defensive back John Sullivan.

"I've seen evidence of the trust the youngsters have developed in him," Campbell says. "On the days he is not actually bringing the program to them, he just visits on campus. Students sit down with him and talk. There's an exchange."

That's what Delvin Williams had in mind from the beginning.

"We have to put some things in place to help kids make transitions," he says, "not just ease them through or ignore their problems altogether, the way we so often do now. In many cases, we're not addressing the issues, we're turning out victims.

"I think this is particularly true with young athletes. We spend millions of dollars making them bigger and stronger and faster but we don't put a cent into developing their minds."

PROS FOR KIDS will hold its 1987 dinner Tuesday night at the Fairmont Hotel, with sportscaster Pat Summerall as emcee and Giants president and general manager Al Rosen as featured speaker (in place of NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle, who had to bow out at the last minute because of another commitment).

Nancy Reagan will not be here this time, but her sentiments will. After the 1986 dinner, she wrote Williams:

"I want you to know how very proud I am of the work you have accomplished in focusing attention on substance abuse. ... For each young life that you touch, giving a healthy, positive role model to follow, you are giving our country a future leader."

Words like that used to be about all that Delvin Williams, 36, had to sustain him and his struggling organization, but he's back in the public spotlight he occupied in the late '70s. The years have made him much more secure, he says ("I don't have to try to maintain a high anymore. I can feel content playing golf or going home and watching TV") and he seems utterly confident about what's ahead.

"A guy has donated more than 1,100 acres in the Napa Valley to us," he says, "and we may build a national training and development center for drug prevention there. We already have spinoff branches in Miami and Austin, Texas. My goal is to have a Pros for Kids chapter in every city where there is a team we can work with, providing athletes and role models for young people. If all goes according to plan, we haven't even touched the tip of the iceberg."

Recruit coaches and athletes to help battle drugs

By Norma Bennett Woolf

WHEN TURPIN High School coaches yell, "Go team," they're not just cheering their football players on to another touchdown. They're urging student athletes to join them in a battle against drug and alcohol abuse.

It's all part of a sports drug prevention program at Forest Hills (Ohio) School District (K-12; enr.: 6,500), which school administrators believe has helped reduce drug and alcohol use among student athletes and cheerleaders.

The program is considered so successful that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, the National High School Athletic Coaches Association, and several professional sports leagues have highlighted it at conferences and coaching clinics.

Here's how the Forest Hills program works: Using their influence with young athletes, coaches discuss the dangers of drugs and drinking and recruit student athletes—especially team captains—to support the antidrug campaign and to discourage drug and alcohol use by bringing peer pressure to bear on teammates.

Before Forest Hills established its program, a school survey found, young athletes were having the same problems with drugs and alcohol as other students, in spite of training rules regarding use of such substances. The May 1983 survey conducted at Turpin High School in Forest Hills, for example, found that 64 percent of the senior class student athletes and cheerleaders had taken a drink during the sports season, 16 percent had smoked marijuana, and 4 percent had taken drugs such as cocaine and heroin.

Although Forest Hills already had a traditional drug abuse program—featuring classroom lectures for prevention and discipline, counseling, and referral—no specific group of students was singled out for attention. But clearly something more needed to be done: Rumors of drug and alcohol use among student athletes were widespread, and a few young athletes were suspended because of the problem.

The move to highlight drug abuse among athletes—and to recruit athletes to help in the effort—grew out of a drug awareness meeting for parents conducted by the Turpin High School athletic boosters club in February 1983. Responding to growing concern following the meeting, Athletic Director Mike Hall (now a high school principal) and two coaches attended an out-of-state seminar on drug abuse and sports. When the group returned, Hall, coaches, and school administrators planned a program to take advantage of the relationship between coaches and athletes to combat drug use.

Hall admits organizers had a powerful advantage going for them: They were concentrating on a select group with a highly developed sense of camaraderie and loyalty. "Athletes are a captive audience," he says. "They have a loyalty to the team that students don't have to algebra class. . . . You can walk into a locker room of 25 kids, and if the coach says 'Pay attention,' they pay attention."

This team spirit gives the program an advantage over traditional school drug abuse programs, Hall adds. Peer pressure among teammates is a strong influence in discouraging drug use. Drawing athletes into the program, however, depends heavily on the efforts of school coaches, Hall says.

"Without the coaches, we would have quit right there," he says. "But the coaches bought into the program. They accepted it as a challenge, and they decided to do something about it."

To succeed, coaches must set an example for their players by strictly enforcing training rules concerning drugs and alcohol, even if that means suspending a star player from a team, Hall says. Coaches also must recruit team captains to enforce training rules and to serve as role models.

And coaches are asked to do more: to discuss the dangers of drugs and alcohol at least once a week during team practices, to learn the signs of drug abuse so they can identify users, to abide by training rules, and to confront team players about situations outside of school when drugs or alcohol will be available.

To recruit parental support, school officials invite athletes' parents to school to cosign training rule pledge cards. Under the terms of the pledge cards, athletes agree not to use alcohol or drugs during the sports season, and parents promise to help make sure the kids keep their word.

The major support of parents is in the form of athletic booster clubs, which in previous years have purchased and distributed copies of "My Parents Don't Think I Drink Because I'm In Sports," a publication of the Minnesota Association of Youth Sports. Boosters also sponsor postgame, alcohol-free parties for team members and cheerleaders.

Students who already are addicted to drugs or alcohol need more than warnings about the dangers of such substances. For these students, the school system has set up a support network of teachers, school nurses, and counselors trained to recognize and deal with drug abuse. Backing them up, the schools have arranged for aid from inpatient and outpatient medical clinics in the Cincinnati area.

To encourage students with a problem to come forward, the policy of suspending athletes who use drugs or alcohol during the sports season is waived if an athlete asks for help.

School officials say they are pleased with the results of their program. A second survey in May 1984 indicated that drinking decreased by 16 percentage points among junior high student athletes and by 9 percentage points among athletes at one high school. Marijuana use dropped 2 percentage points among junior high athletes but rose 18 points among athletes at one high school.

Hall says, "We think we've made big gains. We see an overall and significant improvement. . . . We're not going to get total abstinence among our athletes, but we can get it under control."

Singling out student athletes is only part of the answer, Hall says. Schools still need a drug prevention program for all students. But, as Forest Hills has discovered, a sports-oriented prevention program could be a successful strategy for schools that are looking for a small victory in the battle against drug and alcohol abuse.

If you'd like to learn more, write for a free copy of *For Coaches Only: How To Develop a Drug Prevention Program For Athletes* and *Team Up For Prevention*, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Public Affairs Section, 1405 I St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20537. □

Norma Bennett Woolf is a free-lance writer in Cincinnati.

Ganging up against the preps

By Karen Crouse
Herald Examiner staff writer

The graffiti-graced backboard on the playground blacktop stands unused.

The bleachers at the local high school football game sit half-empty.

The sidelines, benches and dugouts lie barren.

What's going down in the inner city?

Where are all the kids who once flocked to South Central L.A. playgrounds for pick-up games? Where are the crowds that used to make high school football contests a social happening? Where are all the young athletes who couldn't wait to try out for their prep football, basketball and baseball teams?

Pose those questions to coaches, players and local residents and they invariably point to the writing on the wall . . . and on the buses, park benches and billboards of the neighborhood — anywhere local gangs deem fit to leave their graffiti calling cards.

Gangs, they'll tell you, are frightening kids away from the playgrounds and spectators away from high school games, and are providing teen-agers with a financially lucrative alternative to after-school sports. They are, in short, shooting down — literally as well as figuratively — athletic dreams and long-standing sporting rituals of today's inner city youth.

"A *lot* of youngsters still aspire to be athletes," said Charles Norman, the field operations director of the Community Youth Gang Services Project in South Central Los Angeles. "But you have the kind of situation now where they'll be playing ball on the playground and gangs will jump them. Sooner or later they'll end up putting the ball down and joining the gangs, to protect themselves if nothing else."

Bryant (whose last name is being withheld) was such a youngster. An earnest young man of twenty-odd years with a well-muscled torso that suggests an athletic past, Bryant once passed his days running with a gang. Now, as a member of the CYSP graffiti unit, he spends countless hours wiping up the very acts of vandalism he used to carry out.

"When I was younger, I stayed away from that (gangs). I loved sports so I used to hang out at the park all the time," Bryant said. "Then one day a friend of mine and I were shooting baskets and a gang came by in mo-peds and bikes and started circling us and broke up the game and beat us up."

Bryant's voice grew softer.

"When that keeps happening to you," he said, "you feel like you can't really do what you want to do, so you just go ahead and join a gang."

> "So many kids now are choosing to get involved with gangs and drugs, I find myself begging kids to come out for the team. It seems like the kids' minds today are preoccupied with gangs, not football."
>
> **E.C. Robinson**
> **Locke High coach**

"It (gang activity) is definitely affecting the development of youth athletics here," Norman said. "To give you an example, we used to have a lot of Little League baseball teams. We don't have those programs anymore and I'll tell you why they stopped. I can remember many a day having our whole team hit the ground because of gang gunfire. I think that ran off a lot of the coaches."

"The gangs pretty much have taken over the parks," Bryant acknowledged. "If you're a kid, you don't want to hang there."

By the time Bryant reached his teens, *he* was the one inflicting the playground beatings. His love of sports notwithstanding, Bryant shunned high school athletics because, as he explained, "I was too busy hanging with my friends and wondering what we were going to get into next."

BRYANT'S ADMISSION doesn't surprise E.C. Robinson. Robinson, who just concluded his ninth year as the head football coach at Locke High, believes gangs a[re] the reason he has to jog h[is] memory to recall the last time f[ull] football tryouts drew a crowd.

"It used to be that we'd have [to] cut people. But now, we can't [get] that," Robinson said. "So ma[ny] kids now are choosing to g[et] involved with gangs and drugs, [I] find myself begging kids to com[e] out for the team. It seems like th[e] kids' minds today are preocc[u]pied with gangs, not football."

Robinson's lament clearl[y] transcends sports and campuse[s]. Richard Masson, who coache[d] basketball at Jordan High fo[r] seven years before moving t[o] Carson in 1982, said, "In year[s] past, we had a lot more numbers. Every year, it's declining a littl[e] bit and I think the gangs ar[e] definitely one of the reasons fo[r] it.

"When I was at Jordan," Mas[on] son continued, "we lost a lot o[f] kids out of fear. These were kid[s] who weren't into (gangs) and who wanted to play, but they were afraid. They lived on the wrong side of the railroad tracks and they were scared to walk home after practice. There were boundaries and different projects that weren't conducive to crossing. It was tough."

One Jordan player who did traverse the danger zones was Larry Friend, who played for USC on an athletic scholarship after starring for the Bulldogs from 1978-82. He graduated from USC in 1986 with a degree in Public Administration and Urban Planning and is currently beginning his second season as Mas[on]'s assistant at Carson.

Growing up, Friend befriended gang members, but he said he never felt pressured to join their fold. "They never bothered me and I was very focused, so I was never tempted," Friend said. "I saw in basketball a way of bettering myself. I knew from the time I was pretty young what I wanted to do with my life and it wasn't (gangs) or getting involved with drugs.

"I'd look at the older guys selling drugs on the street corners and I'd think that I didn't want to grow up like them. I didn't want to be constantly looking over my shoulder, constantly worrying about getting shot at."

CHARLO DAVIS, a softspoken senior on the Manual Arts basketball team, was fired upon. It

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

happened two summers ago and it changed the sometime gang member's life.

"I was out on my porch with a friend and some guys drove by yelling gang names," Davis recounted. "The next thing I knew, they were firing shots. When the shots occurred, I dove and I remember hearing my friend say, 'I got shot, I got shot.'

"They just got him in the leg, but it kind of gave me the jitters. I had gotten shot at earlier because I was with the wrong people, but when you have a friend get shot right in front of your face, it's the worst thing you can imagine. All you can think is 'I'm next.'

"I stayed in the house for a while after that," Davis said. "I had nightmares where I'd wake up at night hearing gunshots. It made me think, 'Do I always want to walk down the street worrying about getting shot or do I want to do something positive with my life?' "

The choice was clear-cut. Davis started spending as many as 5½ hours a day in the Manual Arts gym honing his basketball skills.

As a result, the 17-year-old is now in a position to earn what seemed hopelessly out of reach a few years ago, namely a college scholarship (he has received letters from Cal State Northridge, the University of New Mexico, New Mexico State and Texas Tech). Moreover, he can walk the streets of his neighborhood, clad in his purple-and-gray letterman's jacket, with more pride than fear.

"People see me now and they'll come at me in a positive way," he said. "They won't say, 'Come back and hang with us.' They'll go, 'I don't want you to get back into it. Keep doing what you're doing. I want you to be someone.' "

No one wants to see Davis succeed more than Davis himself, which is why he tries to look the other way when his stylishly dressed peers drive by in their spanky new Cadillacs and flaunt their drug-subsidized wealth.

"It's hard when you have to wait three months to save up enough money to buy a pair of tennis shoes and you have friends who drive fancy cars and wear fancy clothes and can afford to go to the mall and buy 10 pairs of sneakers anytime they want," Davis said.

"IT'S HARD to convince a lot of kids that drugs and gangs aren't the way to go when they see the older kids driving fancy cars and wearing expensive clothes," Norman of the CYSP acknowledged. "Some of these kids are making thousands of dollars a week. That's more glamorous than going to school and working toward a college education and a job that'll pay $30,000, maybe $40,000 a year."

Carson basketball Coach Masson concurred. "I've had a couple of my former players come up to me with big bucks that they got dealing drugs and say to me, 'Where else can I make this kind of money? I'm making more in one month than you do in a year.' They don't see that it's wrong. They just see the results."

The results are often bought through bloodshed. As the violence increases, more and more spectators at high school sporting events are fleeing the scene with eyewitness accounts of the barbarity:

▶ Earlier in the season, a Fairfax female student was shot as she left the school parking lot after the Colonials' homecoming game against Westchester. The shooting was preceded by a disturbance in the parking lot that slowed the final three minutes of play as football players stopped to watch the outburst.

▶ Three weeks ago, at the start of the second half of a game between Carson High and Dorsey High at Jackie Robinson Field, two gunshots were fired outside the stadium. Security guards inside the stadium quickly scattered but the game continued uninterrupted.

▶ Two weeks ago, a fight broke out among gang members near the north end zone at Veterans Stadium in Long Beach, where a full house had gathered to watch Carson play Banning. No injuries were reported.

For Colts basketball Coach Friend, who was a spectator at Veterans Stadium that evening, the scuffle remains as vivid a memory as yesterday's practice.

"It woke me up and made me realize just how out of control gang violence is becoming," he said. "I think it's a shame when you can't go out and enjoy yourself for two hours without having the element of fear present. With things like that happening, I'm scared myself, to be honest with you."

So, admittedly, is Carson football Coach Gene Vollnogle, although in his case, the seed of fear was planted long before this year's incidents at Jackie Robinson and Veterans stadiums.

"I'll never forget a game we played at Crenshaw in 1983," Vollnogle said. "We were in the weight room dressing when the Crenshaw athletic director knocked on the door. He told me there had been an unfortunate incident, that a kid had just been stabbed right out on the blacktop.

"The kid was dead, but they couldn't move him, so to get to the field, our kids ended up having to literally step right over the body. There was blood all over the place. It was a terrible, terrible sight. I doubt that I'll ever forget it."

Fairfax co-coach Ron Price, who was coaching at Crenshaw at the time of the stabbing incident, called the potential for gang violence at high school sporting events "frightening," and added a bleak afterthought.

"I'm not sure there is anything you can do about it," Price said. "To me, it seems like it's a situation where there are a lot of parents who have failed to curb their kids and everyone else is suffering for it."

Friend disagreed. "It's not really anybody's fault," he said. "You can't put the blame on kids or adults. The bottom line is, everyone chooses the life he wants to live."

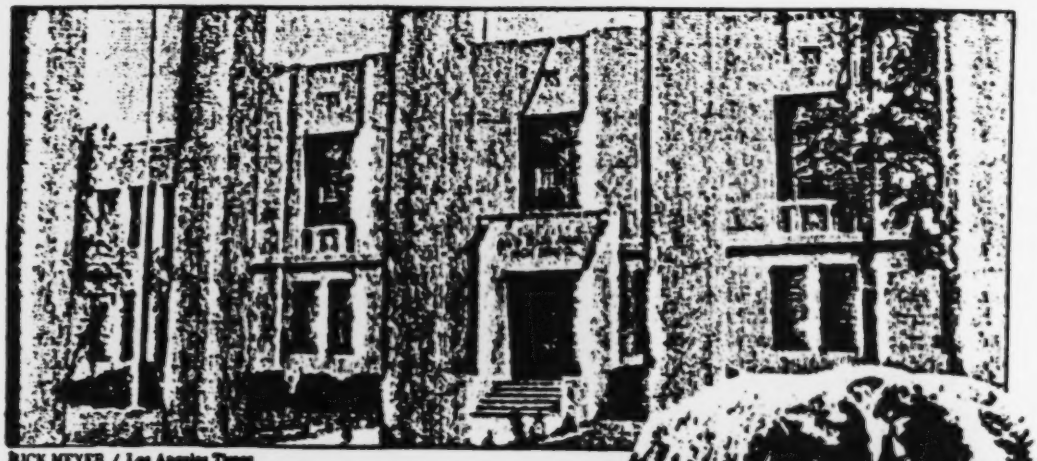
That kids are increasingly choosing a life more destructive than wholesome rankles Jeff, a survivor of the South Central L.A. gang scene who is now assisting Norman at the CYSP.

"It makes me mad because I see kids who are good athletes not utilizing their talents," said Jeff (whose last name also is being withheld).

It also upsets him to see the effects gangs are having on everyone else. "In the games I've gone to recently, I've sensed a real fear among the students, the faculty and the players, a fear that *wasn't* there back when I was in high school 10 years ago," he said. "People will go to the games because they want to show their support of their school, but there doesn't seem to be the enthusiasm you used to see. It's like the people are all in an alert stance. They all have that fear in the back of their minds that something could happen."

Los Angeles Times

Tuesday, June 23, 1987



RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

The Killing Fields

In Some L.A. County Schools, It's Matter of Life and Death

"Under this tree, a boy died."

—Jeff Engilman, former football coach at Manual Arts

By ROBERT YOUNT and ELLIOTT TEAFORD,
Times Staff Writers

Jeff Engilman walks the halls and watches, for that's his job now at Manual Arts High School, a fenced-in compound. As head of security, he tries to make sure that students stay in and non-students stay out.

He checks for hall passes. He looks into suspicious situations. He eases tense moments for frustrated substitute teachers.

As the coach from 1979-84, he won two football championships.

"During [lunch], right over here, right under these fences—gangland-style—they held the kid and shot him in the head . . .

My fullback was killed the following weekend because, they said, he was seen talking to the policeman. He was riding home—they jumped out of the hedges and they shotgunned him."

—Jeff Engilman

Reggie Morris, Manual's basketball coach, is also on patrol.

A few miles away, at Johnson continuation school,

Please see GANGS, Page 4

Sports vs Gangs

First in a series

JEFF ENGILMAN

JAYNE KAMIN-ONCEA / Los Angeles Times

GANGS

Continued from Page 1

he stomps, he shouts, he whispers. He tries to brainwash, he says. Whatever it takes. Gangs, drugs and decay in the inner city have made Morris almost desperate.

There must be alternatives, Morris, Central City coach of the year last season, tells students in his assemblies.

Basketball is an alternative. It, and other sports, used to be *the* way out. But the significance of sports in the inner city has dwindled.

"I'm in a recruiting war with the gangs," Morris says.

Apparently, the gangs are winning. Last season, only 11 of about 1,200 male students went out for the Manual Arts basketball team.

□

Engilman, pointing at a spot on the Manual Arts campus with the 1981 murder of Michael Carr still fresh in his mind, said: "Gang-land-style, they held the kid and shot him in the head."

Carr, a suspected member of the Crips gang who was not involved in athletics, was killed during lunch-time while school was in session.

The next weekend, Earl Bonsinger, who had been the starting fullback for the school's football team, was shot and killed riding home on his motor scooter.

"They jumped out of the hedges and shotgunned him," Engilman said.

Engilman said that a one-time Manual Arts football player was arrested in connection with the Carr killing.

"He wanted me to be a character witness. At the time I said, 'If you want me to be a character witness, first of all, I kicked you off the football team. Second of all, if I'm a character witness for you, then the Crips blow me away. If I don't, the Bloods blow me away.' So I just said I'm not going to do anything.

"So I lost two players. One was my starting fullback. These guys were teen-agers."

Since those killings in 1981, street gangs have gained even more influence in the city and county of Los Angeles.

Paralleling a steady increase in gang activity is a decline in sports participation in many areas, most noticeably South-Central Los Angeles and the inner city.

More kids are joining gangs and far fewer are going out for high school sports.

Male students, coaches and school administrators say, are looking for an easy way out, and in many situations, that appears to be a street gang.

In gang areas, membership means community prestige and influence.

It can also mean quick and easy money. Many gang members sell drugs, especially in South-Central Los Angeles, according to police. The expensive cars and jewelry they display seem to offer a tempting option for a youngster who will probably decide by the time he is in junior high whether he will join a gang or go out for sports.

The gang option apparently is winning but in a curious mixture of cultural values, sporting events are frequent backdrops to gang violence. Thus, gangs not only spoil athletics by skimming potential athletes, but by ruining athletic events as well.

In the last year alone, there have been three shooting incidents involving gangs and sports:

—July 27, 1986. Troy Batiste, a guard on Crenshaw's state championship basketball team and a recent graduate, was shot in the leg by three carloads of gang members.

The attackers shouted gang slogans as they fired in front of a fast-food restaurant near the school at 3:15 a.m. Batiste's teammate, Marcus Williams, was also hit, but suffered only a flesh wound.

Police could not explain the attack because the victims were not known to have any gang affiliation. Police said the shooting was probably a case of mistaken identity.

—Oct. 3, 1986. Gunfire erupts during a fight between rival gangs behind the stands at the Pasadena-Monrovia football game in Monrovia.

Many of the 1,200 fans ran out of the stands in terror, and two bystanders suffered gunshot wounds.

The game was canceled, and players, coaches and officials crawled off of the field on their stomachs.

—March 2, 1987. At Valley Christian High in Cerritos, enrollment 500, Russell Poelstra, a track and field athlete, and another student, Randy Talsma, were shot and wounded in front of the school's weight room by assailants, thought to be gang members, in a planned attack.

The incident was allegedly triggered by an argument between Valley Christian students and gang members the previous night at a local pizza parlor.

Taken individually, the three shootings could be dismissed as isolated incidents, as some school officials have suggested.

Taken together, though, they are hard to ignore.

Some school officials have also suggested that gang problems are strictly *off*-campus problems, that a natural overflow brings community problems into schools and their athletic programs.

There were 135 assaults involving knives, guns, or both, in the Los Angeles Unified School District during the 1985-86 school year.

Ira Reiner, Los Angeles district attorney, said that there are 400 to 500 street gangs in Los Angeles County. Most in South-Central Los Angeles are affiliated with either of two major groups, the Crips and the Bloods, he said. Reiner estimated membership of both predominately black groups at 40,000-50,000. Other estimates, however, are considerably lower.

Reiner was quoted in The Times on June 10 as saying: "They are well armed. They carry Uzi and Mac-10 machine guns, sawed-off shotguns and semi-automatic rifles. They outgun police officers when they have these weapons.

"Right now, the gangs are active in narcotics trafficking. Large-scale Colombian cocaine distributors are starting to deal directly with street gangs because they are street-wise, highly organized and willing to be as vicious as necessary in order to enforce drug trafficking. They are willing to kill at the drop of a hat."

Los Angeles City Atty. James Hahn said: "I don't have to tell you this isn't 'West Side Story' we're dealing with here.

"It's vicious criminals—a lot of kids, plus an even higher percentage of young adults—who organize to deal drugs, pull armed robberies, burglaries and—if anybody gets in their way—to kill people."

There have been more than 200 gang-related killings in Los Angeles County this year, an 80% increase over 1986, according to Reiner. He said the projected 1987 total is 585 killings, compared to 325 last year.

And, as gang participation goes up, sports participation goes down.

Listen to the coaches:

—Reggie Morris, L.A. Manual Arts basketball coach: "I haven't cut anybody [not good enough to make the team] in three or four years. This year, I had 11 guys [on the varsity basketball team] when the season ended. When it began, I had 11 guys. The days of having 80 guys trying out are gone."

The enrollment at Manual Arts, located near Vermont and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Central Los Angeles, was 2,572 in the school year just ended. Roughly 50% were boys.

—Paul Knox, L.A. Dorsey football coach: "The numbers are down. . . . If we didn't have the drugs and the gangs, we might get 5-10 more kids on the football team."

—E.C. Robinson, L.A. Locke football coach: "When I first started, I could cut. But not now. I hate to say it, but now with the gangs and the kids trying to sell drugs, it's a hassle getting kids out for the football team. If I can get 40 kids out for the team at Locke, I'm doing good. Now, we're begging kids to come out for the team."

—Ernie Carr, Compton Dominguez athletic director: "I could make up a team of guys who [could have been outstanding athletes but] never played."

They are not playing, according to Carr and others like him, because they are in gangs, selling[] drugs, or both.

Engilman, the Manual Arts football Coach from 1979-1984, the Reseda Cleveland coach from 1984-86, and the new coach at Reseda in the fall, put it this way: "They're gang members first, and students and football players second."

Athletic events, however, possibly because they are community events, continue to draw gang interest—and gang violence. Some recent incidents:

—At Dominguez High in Compton Sept. 28, 1984, a gang fight broke out in the stands during the Dominguez-Cerritos Gahr football game.

The riot forced cancellation of the game, although there were no serious injuries reported and, according to Carr, no players were in danger.

The fight spread, though, involving up to 100 people, according to Darrell Walsh, Gahr football coach. It spilled onto the track surrounding the football field. Players and coaches, fearful of shooting, hit the ground for five minutes until the fight was broken up.

—Engilman recalled another occasion when he and Willie Nixon, a school policeman, apprehended a gunman on the Manual Arts campus.

The gunman was on campus to kill a member of the football team, he later told Nixon.

"We chased him all over to where he had to draw his gun on me and luckily Willie [Nixon] was there to [apprehend him]," Engilman said.

Said Nixon: "He did admit that he came up here to kill this kid. And the jerk we caught—this guy was 16 years old, 6-5, 195 pounds. He could have played wide receiver, been a basketball player."

Rock-throwing incidents by alleged gang members apparently eager to protect their turf also are commonly described by coaches:

—Paul Knox, Dorsey football coach, said that his team had been "rocked" by gang members.

During Dorsey's 1984 game at Compton High, there was shooting and some rock throwing, although Knox said it had occurred "down the street" from the stadium.

When the team was on the bus leaving Compton High, however, "We got rocked," Knox said.

"[In] 1982, coming back from South Gate, the bus had to stop at Alameda, at the train tracks, and *whoom!* Jordan [High School] kids hit us," Engilman said.

"They hit us with rocks, anything they could get their hands on. I had to take two kids to the hospital.

"It was definitely gang-related. They knew who we were."

□

"For baseball, we have to play at Harvard Park, which is on 62nd Street. Which is Blood country. Well, a lot of our kids are Hispanics. Even when I was coaching, they didn't want to go down there. They were scared. One of our security agents has to go down there for us to play a game."

—Jeff Engilman

From the violence in the gang areas has arisen fear. It afflicts parents, students and other people in the community.

Fear of gangs is the controlling influence for many people.

Several coaches interviewed feared that their comments might bring gang retaliation, and one coach refused to be photographed for the story.

Dorsey is a school that draws students from outside its boundaries. Athletes and other students have to travel through territories to get there. They are often targets.

Said Knox: "We do have kids get harassed and jumped and chased. One of our track kids on Monday [May 11] got jumped on pretty good. He's got a concussion. It happens regularly with athletes."

In another instance several years ago, Engilman said, a Manual Arts football player hid a sawed-off shotgun in a travel bag, taking it with him to a road game.

"He had to go to Jordan and he was scared," Engilman said.

"We didn't know about it until later, until he was far away from the school. Then we heard about it from some of the guys on the team."

The 1984 Dominguez riot resulted in a three-week boycott of all sporting events at Dominguez by the rest of the San Gabriel Valley League.

"I wonder if someone will have to get shot before something is done," Gahr's Walsh said at the time.

Monrovia and Pasadena have agreed not to play each other in football next season in hopes of heading off another gang incident such as the shooting last October.

"We don't want question marks in our minds next year," Al Clegg, the Monrovia football coach said.

Indeed, Clegg said, security at home games will be increased. "We're just going to evaluate who gets in," he said.

Knox said the 1984 rock-throwing incident came as no surprise to his team.

The team had been afraid on the bus ride to Compton because the driver had taken a back route, hoping to avoid trouble.

'I don't have to tell you this isn't 'West Side Story' we're dealing with here. . . .It's vicious criminals—a lot of kids, plus an even higher percentage of young adults—who organize to deal drugs, pull armed robberies, burglaries and—if anybody gets in their way—to kill people.'

—JAMES HAHN, Los Angeles City Attorney

"I looked in their faces and I saw that we were not going to win," Knox said. "They were intimidated, not by the team, but by the surroundings. We've never had to take precautions like that before.

"At Jordan, gang members walked right through the football warmups once. They said some things to our kids and kept going. That raised a few eyebrows."

E.C. Robinson, Locke football coach, said that fear can override a players' on-the-field motivations.

"It's the gang stuff that's going to affect their playing," Robinson said. "You fear the gang. You can't operate if you're afraid someone's going to start shooting in the stands.

"During the season they'll tell you there's an incident of a shooting where they'll feel there will be some sort of retaliation. They'll tell you, 'I have to go home early today [from practice].' And I'll ask why and they'll say 'Well, somebody got shot last night.'

"And they want to get home before it gets dark. If something's going down in their neighborhood or on their block then they'll feel that [on the field], you know."

After the Carr-Bonsinger slayings in 1981, L.A. University refused to play its first-round basketball playoff game at night at Manual Arts.

"They didn't want to come over here at night," Morris said. "And you really couldn't blame them."

Daytime practice is not immune to gang-related incidents, either. Engilman said: "There have been days when we [coaches] used to go through baseball practice carrying a bat."

Morris acknowledged that he's scared.

"This is my 14th year here," he said. "I haven't been in the service, but I've seen two people die, and both of them died right here at school."

Morris said that he talks to athletes and tells them: "Hey, you've gotta go to class, do this, do that.

"They say 'OK, fine.' The next week, they're pulling the trigger on somebody.

"So sometimes, you back off and say, 'Maybe I'd better not say this to the person,' in fear of retaliation."

Said Engilman: "We've all been threatened, many times. Whether each [threat] is gang related, we never know."

Many teams worry about playing at a school in an area controlled by a gang at odds with the one that controls the team's own area. Several seem especially to fear one place—"the Doghouse," L.A. Jordan. That's particularly true of Locke, Jordan's traditional rival.

"Jordan High School is the only place kids really fear," Robinson said. "They just fear Jordan. They hate to play at Jordan."

Jordan High sits on 103rd Street in Watts, a couple of miles from Locke but in a different realm altogether.

Locke is in a rather quiet residential neighborhood. Jordan, on the other hand, is between two government projects—the Imperial Courts and the Jordan Downs, hotbeds of gang activity and one of the most crime-ridden areas in Los Angeles, according to police.

"It's a very bad image," said former Jordan football Coach Ed Woody, who will be succeeded in the fall by Jordan graduate Darryl Divinity.

A school's reputation breeds fear, Robinson said, which means that many potential athletes choose to attend Valley schools rather than take their chances in the inner city.

"There are kids living in the Locke district who want to play," Robinson said. "You call the parents and the first thing they say is 'Well, look, what about the gangs?'

"That's one reason you have a lot of kids that are being bused out—they're afraid of the pressure from the gangs."

Knox said: "A big problem is our [Dorsey's] reputation as a rough school. [Dorsey is located near Rodeo and Farmdale streets, near Rancho Cienega Park].

"Maybe it's the Blood element. That's why the kids go to the bus. We've had incidents on campus or around the campus, and we do have a hard time convincing parents to send their kids here, that, hey, Dorsey isn't all that bad.

"A lot of kids end up going to Fairfax or the bus [to the valley] It's a constant fight."

Next: The economic lure of the gangs.

Los Angeles Times

4 Part III / Tuesday, June 23, 1987 ★

First in a Series

SPORTS VS. GANGS

The Watts Rivalry That Is Never Settled: the Bloods Against the Crips

By ELLIOTT TEAFORD and ROBERT YOUNT,
Times Staff Writers

What *is* the biggest rivalry in Watts?
Is it Jordan High School vs. Locke?
Or is it the Bloods vs. the Crips?
It's difficult to tell.

Each year, Jordan and Locke meet in a nonleague football game known as the "Super Bowl of Watts." At the end of the game, there is a winner and a loser.

But for the gangs, it's an ongoing contest without a final score. The buzzer never sounds. It's never over.

Segments of the two largest, though only loosely organized, Los Angeles street gangs wage 24-hour war. Bloods fight Crips. Crips fight Bloods. Crips fight other Crips.

Although in many ways, gang rivalries transcend the battles on the playing field, the two are often entwined.

Jordan and Locke are natural rivals. Both are in Watts. Jordan is on 103rd Street, between two government projects, the Jordan Downs and Imperial Courts. Locke is about three miles away on 111th Street.

The entire area is a hotbed of gang activity in Los Angeles.

Each school takes a different approach to the game.

Ed Woody, former Jordan football coach, calls the game a tension resolver.

"We've had games with Locke where *everything* was taken out in the football game, everything comes out on the field," Woody said.

Everything meaning gang-related tension in Watts.

E.C. Robinson, Locke coach, said his players gear up for the game, but fear playing at Jordan.

Woody and others have said that competitive emotion is sometimes mistaken for gang rivalry.

"Sometimes you have a conflict on the field and it'll be blown out of proportion—that will set us back 10 years," Woody said. "Instead of looking at it as a flaring of tempers, they'll more or less sometimes say, 'That's gangs.'

"Fairfax and Jordan, a flaring of tempers—'That's gangs,' they'll say. That's not gangs, it's just a flaring of tempers. Happens in every game."

The Locke kids fear Jordan, Robinson said—not Jordan's athletic teams, but the area gangs.

Kenneth Williams, a former Locke running back, said: "We were scared to go to Jordan. We didn't want to go to Jordan. We hated Jordan. We were scared of getting shot."

Four years ago, there was a fight in the stands at Jordan during the annual game, Robinson said. It is the only incident of gang violence during an athletic event that Robinson can recall in the eight years he has coached at Locke.

Williams did not recall specific incidents, but said:

"There would be threats and there would be talk before. But there would be a lot of police there for protection. Nothing really happened, except a few scuffles [in the stands as well as the game itself]."

Woody feels otherwise.

"I definitely think that Jordan High is one of the safest in the [Los Angeles Unified School] district," he said. "Unfortunately, a reputation, one that we don't deserve, exists. I think it's just an old reputation that won't die.

"I've never been scared," Woody said. "The thing about 'Bulldog City' is, we'll go anywhere. That's along with the community, also. Some schools worry about threats, idle threats by kids. Not at the Doghouse. We'll go anywhere, to any school, and participate in anything."

Los Angeles Times
Wednesday, June 24, 1987

SPORTS

Valley Coverage, Pages 12-13

F/CC1/Part III

Drug Money—Selling Out of a Generation

How Do You Keep Them in School When There's Big Bucks on Street?

"It used to be, athletics were the way out of this environment for a young black. . . . Nowadays, why the hell worry about it? Why spend time in college for four years, to get out of college and make thirty, forty thousand dollars a year when some of these kids are making six, seven thousand dollars a week selling cocaine?"

—WILLIE NIXON,
Los Angeles Police Dept. school officer

By ROBERT YOUNT and ELLIOTT TEAFORD,
Times Staff Writers

Athletics can provide a way out of the inner city, says Reggie Morris, the basketball coach at Manual Arts High School in Los Angeles.

Athletic talent can lead to a college scholarship and, sometimes, to a professional sports career. Even discounting the pro career, though, a college education figures to give a young man or woman a wider choice of careers than can be found in the inner city.

This, apparently, is not attractive enough anymore.

Byron Scott, the starting Laker guard who graduated from Morningside in Inglewood in 1979, notices this too.

"I think they're discouraged," Scott said. "In '79, we looked at sports as a way out of the ghetto. You know, to make it, to buy your mother and father the things they've always wanted.

"I think kids today look at it pretty much the same way, but they don't want to work at it. They want to find the quick money and sell drugs."

The arrival of cocaine and crack, its derivative, as economic elements in the inner city has realigned values, according to administrators and coaches. From this has sprouted a new materialism, Morris said, and it transcends the discipline and dedication needed to pursue athletics. Money is the idol.

THE $1,000-A-WEEK ALTERNATIVE

Gang emblems or colors are strictly prohibited at Manual Arts High, but Reggie Morris wears colors of his own.

Sports vs. Gangs

Second in a series

RICK MEYER / Los Angeles Times

At Manual Arts High School, only 11 of approximately 1,200 male students went out for the basketball team.

GANGS

Continued from Page 1

His sweater, a conservative gray V-neck, is adorned with various buttons, one an international circle-slash—meaning *no*—around block letters reading "GANGS." A gold cross hanging from a chain is conspicuously exposed outside his collar. All are part of the Reggie Morris alternative. He wants youngsters to see him as a walking, living example that a clean life in the inner city is possible.

"I try to use myself as another example," Morris said. "Another person who is alive today because he's stayed away from drugs."

Apparently, few on the Manual Arts campus subscribe to Morris' philosophy. Flashiness is prevalent. Exotic cars are parked around the grounds.

Morris can offer himself, his City basketball titles in 1977 and '81, his coach-of-the-year awards, his intelligence and understanding, his time and his patience.

All of that brought just 11 of the roughly 1,200 male students at Manual Arts out for the varsity basketball team last season.

"It's not just affecting athletics, it's affecting education," Morris said.

"How do you combat someone that will come up to us with literally two, three thousand dollars in their pocket, driving a Mercedes or a BMW, at 16, 17 years old?"

At Locke High in Watts, where the parking lot also was dotted with expensive-looking cars, the same holds true, according to E. C. Robinson, the football coach.

"Right now, I know of five kids who could be starting on the football team, but they're out selling drugs," Robinson said. "They will tell you, 'Hey, I make just as much money as you do.'

"You see kids riding around in new cars. You'd be surprised. I know a [former player] who's not playing now that's got a brand new Mercedes."

Detective supervisor Robert K. Jackson of the Los Angeles Police Dept.'s gang section said that although those gangs that are predominantly Latino have remained "traditional"—still primarily concerned with "turf" control—black gangs of South-Central Los Angeles have turned to drug trafficking as their primary activity.

"Members of those [black] gangs are selling the drugs, there's no doubt about that," Jackson said.

The Lakers' Michael Cooper, who spends much of his free time speaking to youngsters, said: "If you do it the drug way you can be the boss. I think kids are falling prey to that because it is the easy way out. Or the easy way up, shall we say."

Said Willie Nixon, LAPD officer assigned to Manual Arts: "You sit them down and you tell them about how much better off they'll be if they have an education, and an education will cost them $15,000 a year, and the only way they're going to get that education is through sports.

"It's hard as hell to do that when the kid has $3,000 in his pocket."

Ernie Carr, athletic director at Dominguez High in Compton, said: "Kids in our community are softer, more apathetic. You'd think that coming from a poorer, minority community, they'd be more motivated to change their environment.

"The process of education is not as appealing as when I was in high school 20 years ago."

Willie West, who has won City and state championships as basketball coach at Crenshaw, agrees.

West said that lack of discipline—developed through constant exposure to drug-related money—keeps some prospective athletes away.

"They tend not to want to go through the rigors of physical workout, the discipline," West said. "I think a lot of other guys who possibly could or would be good athletes have chosen to be sellers of various things to make money, other than staying out there and playing sports."

Roland Houston, dean at Manual Arts for 22 years, said that in his time there, gang and drug activity had increased dramatically while sports was declining at nearly the same rate. A fundamental lack of discipline is to blame for that, Houston said.

"If there's one basic characteristic gang members have, it's lack of discipline," Houston said. "If they were disciplined, they would take over the city."

In some cases, money has brought the drug dealer prominence and a new role as the big man on campus.

"It used to be, 'You're going to go to college, you're going to be somebody and you're going to make it,'" Morris said. "Here's a guy who's 16 years old with money in his hand, who says: 'I've made it! I don't need education, I don't need basketball.'

"It used to be, 'I gotta make the team! I gotta make the team! I get a girlfriend if I make the team.' I used to have to cut guys because they weren't good enough. The days of having 80 guys try out and having problems with that are over."

When do kids develop the role models and attitudes toward sports that they carry with them into high school and beyond?

Coaches say it's in junior high school. And in Los Angeles junior highs, sports programs have become virtually nonexistent. Also in L.A. junior highs, gangs reorun.

BUILDING BLOCKS AND COCAINE ROCKS

"Gangs used to not be so bad in the junior high schools," Robinson said. "But now, by the 10th grade, it's too late."

Det. Jackson agreed. "By the time they get to high school, they've been inundated by gang activity," he said. "Their attitude is 'What's in it for me?' "

The Lakers' Scott said that kids choose gangs or athletics between the ages of 14 and 16.

"A lot of kids in the community got involved because they thought it was something cool," Scott said. "But in a lot of gangs in L.A., there's no way out. The only way out is death. That's the way it goes."

Ed Woody, former Jordan football coach, agreed, partially.

"Many of the kids are in gangs when they're in junior high school so you really have to redirect their thought," he said.

He also said, however, that in some cases such redirection was possible, noting that he has had numerous athletes who were gang members when they got to Jordan, then dropped out of the gangs to participate in sports.

"They really haven't been to high school, where they have sports," Woody said. "You have to redirect the energy they have, into sports."

'It used to be, "You're going to go to college, you're going to be somebody and you're going to make it." Here's a guy who's 16 years old with money in his hand, who says: "I've made it! I don't need education, I don't need basketball."'

—REGGIE MORRIS, Manual Arts basketball coach

SPORTS VS. GANGS

■ Second in a Series

Jeff Engilman, former football coach at Manual Arts and now in charge of security there, said that such cases were not common. "By the time we get them, sometimes they're so influenced, there's nothing you can do about it."

Morris said he used to approach possible athletes, who looked as if they might be gang members, about playing basketball, but no more.

"If I see the guy who is 6-7, with the hat, with the dress, with the [gang] look, he's not going to want to conform," Morris said.

Because of gang exposure at such early ages, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) programs, co-sponsored by the police department and the school district, are presented in each of the district's intermediate and elementary schools.

Heavy gang exposure is also why Morris gives his "There Must Be Alternatives" assemblies to student groups of all ages.

Promoting sports as an alternative to gang membership and drugs apparently must be done at an early age, or the imprinting of the junior high school years is likely to override whatever "positive brainwashing" can later be achieved.

THE OTHER 15 HOURS

"He should have been home in bed; it was way past his bed time."

—Crenshaw basketball Coach Willie West, on Troy Batiste, shooting victim and basketball player.

Troy Batiste, a guard on Crenshaw High's 1986 state championship basketball team, was shot in the leg by three carloads of gang members in front of a fast-food restaurant last July. Police later explained the shooting as an apparent case of mistaken identity. But it occurred at 3:15 in the morning.

School people—teachers, administrators, coaches—can only influence students during school time, nine hours a day at most, including time on the athletic field.

What happens after that, and during vacation time, is, in the words of Engilman, "totally out of our control."

And that is a huge part of the problem.

"If I could keep them for 20 hours a day, I would," said Morris, who added that there's never enough "positive brainwashing" to offset the bad influences of the environment.

"I've known a kid that's in prison right now that could have been a top-notch player," Engilman said. "This kid was 6-5, 245. He could not stay out of the gangs. I would talk to him and talk to him, and everything at school would look OK, and he would straighten up for two weeks. Then back again.

"See, while they're here, I can control them, I can watch them. I have absolutely no control over what happens when they walk out of here."

In the ideal situation, parental influence takes over when kids leave school for the day. Unfortunately in the inner city, there is no parental influence in many cases.

"That's the problem—they have no parental support whatsoever," Engilman said. "You deal with some of the parents and it's just ridiculous.

"Some of [the students] don't even have parents. Some of them live with their grandparents. That route is shut out right there."

Still, educators keep trying because there are times when "it does work," Engilman said.

Locke's Robinson said: "In this particular area, a lot of kids have only one parent, and a lot of times it's the mother. At night, she can't control those two kids *and* the two little kids at home.

"I talk to all my kids' parents at least once a week. I let them know about the books and their grades, or I feel like they're beginning to hang with the wrong crowd. If I didn't call the parents once a week now [in the spring], we wouldn't have a team in September.

"Once you call all the parents, they see where you are concerned. For good or bad, they'll get on that kid."

An allegedly gang-related shooting that wounded a track and field athlete and another student March 2 on the Cerritos Valley Christian campus was the result of an off-campus confrontation between students and gang members at a pizza parlor.

"It was very much an eye-opener," said Todd Holstege, Valley Christian track and field coach. "We had some very good chapels at school about this, and how we, as Christians, should act out in society to try and work against these kind of things.

"Especially off campus, when we [coaches] are not around. We were thinking we were protected from the outside world realities. So I think it kind of burst our bubble and made us realize where we are and what is happening [around us]."

The duel of influences, as it were, makes it difficult for a student to develop a balanced life style, West said.

"Because of where they live, more or less the kid has to be a type of schizophrenic—he's got to live one life at school and live another life when he gets home," West said.

"He has to be one person at school, and then he has to switch back. And a lot of kids quit playing because they just can't deal with that. It's tough.

"It takes a very strong person to break away from that. I've heard coaches tell kids living that kind of life that they don't know if they'll see them the next day or not."

Morris hopes the energy of his message, at least, will carry over into the other 15 hours.

"In these assemblies, I'm saying 'I don't know you but I care about you,'" Morris said. "I can keep them for eight hours a day, positive brainwashing for eight hours.

"But once they get out on the streets, man, society's a *mother*."

Next: Mixing gangs and athletics.

How One Gang Member Broke Out of the Trap

By ROBERT YOUNT and ELLIOTT TEAFORD,
Times Staff Writers

One day, when Kenneth Williams was 17, he found himself sitting in Juvenile Hall, weighing his options.

The way Williams figured it, he had three choices: Get killed, go to jail or play football.

Williams was a gang member at 12. Six of his friends had been killed in gang violence. And here he was in Juvenile Hall.

"I got busted, spent a few days in Juvenile Hall," Williams said. "I didn't want my mother to cry. I didn't want her to have to sit at home, knowing I was running with a gang, getting in trouble.

"I decided in my heart to play sports, and that's what I did. I think it was always in me."

Williams transferred to Locke High School in Watts, away from his local gang, after his junior season at Gardena. He had played football at Gardena, maintaining his gang affiliation at the same time.

At Locke, he shed his gang ties and helped the team to an 11-1 record and a berth in the City 3-A championship game.

As a senior, he gained more than 500 yards as a starting running back.

He went on to Santa Monica College, where he started at running back in the 1985 and '86 seasons, earning All-Western State Conference honors both seasons. Williams said he plans to go to Fresno State, where he hopes to continue his football career, in the fall.

He rushed for 790 yards last season for the Corsairs. He had 1,670 yards in his two seasons, fourth-best in Santa Monica history, according to Robert Taylor, Santa Monica assistant coach.

"Once he started playing football, he cut loose," E. C. Robinson, Locke football coach, said of Williams. "I think the reason he did was he knew for a fact that if he messed up again, he was going back [into custody]."

At Locke, Robinson served as a role model for Williams.

"I knew the day I met the man [Robinson] that I would never be a gang member again—I'd be a football player," Williams said.

The move, Locke, and Robinson changed Williams' life.

"I never go back to the old neighborhood, never think about that part of my life because it was wrong," Williams said.

He said that sports usually does not rank high in a gang member's priorities.

"He's not thinking about sports," Williams said. "He's thinking about drugs and gangs. Maybe a couple are thinking about sports.

"Out of 10 guys I knew in the neighborhood, I'd say two went to school or [played] sports. The other eight went to gangs and drugs. And then they'd go to jail or die."

Williams said it isn't enough just to quit a gang.

"I moved," he said. "That's how I got out. It was in my heart to play sports and that's what I did. But I had to get out.

"When I see someone going in that direction, I tell them they're going to lose their life. I tell them I used to be in the streets and I know what it's about. Either you're going to be in jail the rest of your life, or you're going to be in the ground.

"Play ball, and you'll get a new direction in life."

Sports vs. Gangs
Third in a series

os Angeles Times
ursday, June 25, 1987

SPORTS

Coaches Fight Recruiting War of Different Nature

Once Students Become Involved With Gangs, It's Nearly Impossible to Get Them Into Athletics

By ELLIOTT TEAFORD
and ROBERT YOUNT,
Times Staff Writers

The 11th-grader caught Ernie Carr's eye one day last fall in Carr's physical education class.

Students 6 feet 4 inches tall tend to stand out in general P.E.

Carr, the basketball coach and athletic director at Dominguez High School in Compton, persuaded the young man to attend an off-season varsity practice after school.

The youth arrived in jeans. He had no basketball attire except for his shoes. He didn't have a gym bag. Still, he showed promise. He picked up the fundamentals quickly. His movements were graceful. He dunked the basketball effortlessly. Carr thought he had found a diamond in the rough.

Then the problems began.

Carr saw the player only about once a week. He was "habitually absent" from school. Carr noticed the student hanging around with the "wrong people" at school.

"You want to indulge the effort," Carr said. "But you don't see him for a week. If you try too hard on them, spend all your time, you'll lose the kids you already have in the fold. The overtures you make toward them aren't going to be heard."

Carr said that twice in the past school year he approached students he thought might be gang members because he also thought they could be basketball players.

He was 0 for 2.

□

Coaches in areas of high gang activity are waging a bitter fight to entice potential athletes away from the gangs.

Some are mildly successful. Ed Woody, former L.A. Jordan High football coach, said he was able to bring as many as nine gang members a year into the major sports.

But for others, such as Reggie Morris, Manual Arts basketball coach, the numbers don't exist. They just aren't able to interest gang members in athletics for any extended period of time.

Apparently, once students get involved with gangs it's nearly impossible to get them out.

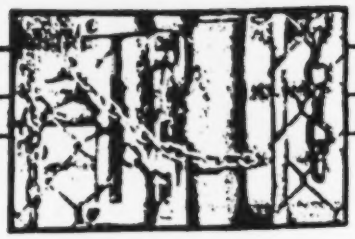
Said Byron Scott, the Laker guard who graduated from

Please see GANGS, Page 12

Continued from Page 1

Morningside High in Inglewood in 1979. "A lot of kids in the community got involved because they thought it was something cool, but in a lot of gangs in L.A. there's no way out. The only way out is death. That's the way it goes."

Kenneth Williams, a former Locke High football player and also a former gang member, said: "There was pressure [to join the gang] But I also thought it was something that was cool, something that would make you be cool. The gangs were everywhere. You couldn't miss it."



Willie Allen, Pomona basketball coach, said: "Once [students] get involved [with gangs], they tend to stay away from athletics. I guess the gang becomes the family. Athletics is a family, too. Maybe they can't be in two families at once. Maybe they can't break away. There's a lot of pressure from the gang to stay."

Indeed, most coaches have stories of gang members who managed to break free of the gangs, only to falter and fall back.

Woody said that frequently, there are large numbers of gang members out for football at the start of the season.

How many stick it out?

"Maybe six or seven," Woody said. "We usually lose them to eligibility. That's when he gets back with his friends, kind of slips back into that old mold."

Sometimes, though, an incidence of gang violence will push some over the line to athletics for good.

Last year, Howard Robinson, a tailback and nose guard on the 1981 Jordan team, was shot and killed.

"It forced the kids participating in sports to realize, to open their eyes," Woody said. "Some told me they didn't want to get involved with gangs because of this, that they wanted to stick with sports."

For the most part, though, the coaches say, there is steady traffic away from sports.

Experience tells E. C. Robinson, the football coach at Locke in Watts, that he shouldn't bother with prospects he believes are gang members. They usually are trouble and rarely complete the season. Despite past failures, however, Robinson remains hopeful.

"I had a kid [transfer] from Carson about two years ago now," Robinson said. "He was about 6-3 and about 285. He played linebacker. And the reason he left Carson was because he was in a gang. He was out for a while, but it got so bad. He was a Blood and around here it's the Crips. He wasn't working out."

Robinson said he wins over only 50% of the players who are also gang members. His is one of the higher ratios.

Morris, basketball coach at Manual Arts, has also become frustrated in his efforts to sway the gang members. Unlike Robinson, Morris has stopped approaching prospects he suspects are gang members.

"In all honesty, I don't do it as much as I used to because if I see a guy who is 6-7 with the hat, with the dress, with *the look*, he's not going to want to conform," Morris said.

"Ten years ago, we could approach everybody. There are guys here, right now, that are in gangs and drugs that are 6-6, 6-7. Real prospects."

Rare though they may be, there are some lasting successes. Some students have shed their gang ties and played in high school. Some have even gone on to play in college.

Those victories encourage some coaches to keep trying with gang members who show potential as athletes.

"If you could talk to 100 kids and one kid changes, I think you've made some progress," Scott said.

□

According to Ira Reiner, L.A. district attorney, there are between 40,000 to 50,000 gang members belonging to 400-500 gangs in Los Angeles County.

The police department has 15,000 names of known gang members in its computer listing.

There are gang prevention programs in Los Angeles County schools and the communities, and they have received more exposure recently because of a higher awareness of drug problems in this country.

Still, there apparently are not enough programs to counter gang growth. There were 450 established gangs in 1980, up from 320 in 1980, according to the Community Youth Gang Services Project.

One of the oldest school-related gang prevention programs, Alternatives to Gang Membership, was started in 1982 in the Paramount schools.

Other similar programs, sponsored by the United Way, have been started since then. In the San Pedro, South-Central Los Angeles and Pasadena-Altadena areas, fourth-, fifth- and sixth-grade students go through programs designed to point out alternatives.

"The idea is to teach the children how to stay out of gangs, in hopes of eventually cutting off gang recruitment altogether.

Dan Verches, in charge of United Way area gang programs, says it's working.

"The success rate is very high," Verches said. "We give them a pre-test and a test after the program, and according to those test figures, 90% are saying no to gangs and drugs."

Said the Lakers' Scott: "They have math, they have biology [in the schools]. I think it would be great to have a class on inner-city gangs. If you could do anything just to scare them about what gangs and drugs can do to them."

Before the Paramount program started, a survey found that 50% of the students there approved of joining a gang. That figure fell to 10% after the program was instituted.

There are other recently developed school programs, among them Project Heavy in the L.A. Unified School District, Cops for Kids in L.A. County and Turning Point in Orange County.

So far, however, gang prevention programs have not been enough to offset gangs' enormous influence.

Steve Valdivia, who runs the L.A. County-sponsored Community Youth Gangs Services Project, says the gang problem is so overwhelming that adequate resources are simply not available.

GANGS

"*Anywhere*, I don't think you can find the resources," Valdivia said. "As it is, we're having $88,000 cut from our budget next year [from a County budget of $1.1 million]."

Still, Valdivia said, the program is effective, with leagues set up to pit rival gangs against each other in sports contests instead of fire fights.

"[The games] can sometimes be bloody affairs, in that they don't want to wear the traditional football gear and really want to get into it," Valdivia said.

"We hope to see some communication. Something to win except a gun battle. Instead they can win trophies on the football field.

"I'm sure there have been kids that have returned to school and followed school sports as an avenue. It's a short-term solution for problems between the gangs."

The Community Youth Gang Services Project has 5 offices, employs 56 workers and has another 20 volunteers, Valdivia said. That for the 50,000 or so gang members in L.A. County, he added.

□

There are many answers to the gang problem. And yet there are no answers.

Coaches, school officials, police officials will do most anything to persuade students to stay away from gangs.

They scream. They whisper. They plead. They scold. They warn. They trick.

And yet, the problem persists and grows.

Without sports, though, the problem might be even worse.

Said Richard Vladovic, Locke principal: "Sports have been a unifying factor [in] breaking down gangs. I really feel that."

Vladovic believes that Robinson is a big influence on his players. In fact, Robinson had the starters on last season's football team attend a class that prepared them to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test for college.

"If they wanted to play football for him, they had to be at school at 7 o'clock in the morning for that class," Vladovic said.

Said Michael Cooper of the Lakers: "I'm always out there [giving talks] because I know that when I was growing up I was looking for help. That's what we're doing, trying to help one, two, as many as we can."

Morris, Manual's basketball coach, would like to see more of that kind of help.

"We need athletes returning [to talk in the schools] and saying, 'This is where hard work got me and it can do the same for you,'" he said. "I had one pro athlete from a local team tell me that he couldn't do it because he was on vacation. Vacation? We need recognizable figures to come out and be role models."

Carr, Dominguez basketball coach, said: "You have to separate the 9- to 14-year-olds from the 18- to 22-year-olds hanging out doing nothing. Younger kids come into contact with this guy and he has a great impact on them. They identify with the success of the older guy. Maybe it's girls or money, by whatever means he got it. The older ones have chosen their path."

Said Woody, former Jordan football coach:

"On the weekend, I've challenged Imperial Courts and Jordan Downs [two government housing projects] to a football game. So instead of getting out there during the week and shooting each other and fighting, I get the [sideline] chains and throw them out a football and they get rid of their anxieties out there on the football field. It's a good old sandlot football game. I've been doing that for five years."

Despite all that, the gangs have established such a foothold that the trend away from sports may be irreversible. Joining a gang has become accepted culturally. Join a gang, deal drugs and earn lots of money. It's the easy way, the cool way.

Go to school, get good grades, play sports and graduate, then go to college, get good grades and graduate. That's the hard way.

For the Record

Willie Nixon was misidentified in the second installment of Sports vs. Gangs in Wednesday's editions. He is a policeman for the Los Angeles Unified School District.